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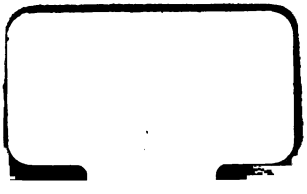

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MODERN

ACTING DRAMA.

VOL. I.

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Miller's

MODERN ACTING DRAMA,

CONSISTING OF

THE MOST POPULAR PIECES

PRODUCED AT THE

LONDON THEATRES,

SUBJECT TO THE

PROVISIONS OF THE DRAMATIC COPYRIGHT ACT.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING

NELL GWYNNE,	THE KING'S FOOL,
THE HOUSEKEEPER,	FRA DIAVOLO.
THE WEDDING GOWN,	

LONDON:

JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.
(Agent to the Dramatic Authors' Society.)

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NELL GWYNNE;

OR,

THE PROLOGUE.

A COMEDY,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY

DOUGLAS JERROLD,

AUTHOR OF

"JOHN OVERY," "BLACK-EYED SUSAN," "THE BRIDE OF LUDGATE,"
"THE RENT DAY," &c. &c.

PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

LONDON:

JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.
(Agent to the Dramatic Author's Society.)

1833.

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LONDON:

BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON,
JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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Whilst we may safely reject as unfounded gossip many of the stories associated with the name of Nell Gwynne, we cannot refuse belief to the various proofs of kind-heartedness, liberality, and—taking into consideration her subsequent power to do harm—absolute goodness of a woman mingling—(if we may believe a passage in Pepys,)—from her earliest years in the most depraved scenes of a most dissolute age. The life of Nell Gwynne, from the time of her connexion with Charles the Second, to that of her death, proved that error had been forced upon her by circumstances, rather than indulged from choice. It was under this impression that the present little comedy was undertaken: under this conviction an attempt has been made to shew some glimpses of the "silver lining" of a character, to whose influence over an unprincipled voluptuary, we owe a national asylum for veteran soldiers, and whose brightness shines with the most amiable lustre in many actions of her life, and in the last disposal of her worldly effects.

The following lines of Rochester are a conclusive proof that Nell Gwynne first attended the theatre as an orange-girl. Whether she assumed the calling, in order to attract the notice of Betterton,—who, it is said, on having heard her recite and sing, discouraged her hopes of theatrical eminence;—or whether her love of the stage grew from her original trade of play-house fruit-girl, has not yet been clearly shewn. Indeed, nothing certain can be gathered of her parentage or place of birth: even her name has, lately, been disputed. That, from "the pit she mounted to the stage," is, however, on the poetic testimony of Rochester, indisputable:—

> "The orange-basket her fair arm did suit,
> Laden with pippins and Hesperian fruit;
> This first step raised, to the wond'ring pit she sold
> The lovely fruit, smiling with streaks of gold.
> Fate now for her did its whole force engage,
> And from the pit she mounted to the stage;
> There in full lustre did her glories shine,
> And, long eclips'd, spread forth their light divine;
> There Hart and Rowley's soul she did ensnare,
> And made a king a rival to a player."

She spoke a new prologue to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle:* she afterwards played *Queen Almahide,* in Dryden's *Conquest of Grenada,* besides speaking the prologue "in a broad-brimmed hat and waste belt." The history of this hat and belt is given by old Downes, the prompter, in his valuable

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Roscius Anglicanus, a chance perusal of which, first suggested the idea of this drama.

On the death of Charles our heroine lived a secluded life. She inhabited a house, in Pall-Mall, built for her on her retirement from the stage by the king. According to Pennant (in his *Account of London*,) the walls of the back room on the ground floor, were entirely covered with looking-glass, as, it was said, the ceiling had been. Over the chimney, was her picture. At this house, she died, in November, 1687; the day of the month is unknown. Her mother was drowned near the Neat-houses, Chelsea, in July, 1679. Any further account of her kindred has escaped research. She was interred on the 17th of November in the old church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields: her funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Tenison, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. The Queen, in allusion to the circumstance, said she was convinced the deceased had merited the praises of the worthy Doctor, or he had never bestowed them.

Among the correspondence of Sir George Etherege, with the Scotch College, at Ratisbon, is a letter to him, from his under secretary, Mr. Wigmore, written on the 18th of November, in which he acquaints him—

"Last night was buried Mad. Ellen Gwyn, the D. of St. Alban's mother. She has made a very formal will, and died richer than she seemed to be whilst she lived. She is said to have died piously and penitently; and as she dispensed several charities in her lifetime, so she left several such legacies at her death; but what is much admired is, she died worth, and left to D. St. Alban's, *vivis et modis*, about 1,000,000*l.* sterling, a great many say more, few less."

"The assertion of her dying worth a million of money (says a writer in *The Athenæum*) is hardly worth attention; the extract from the original letter, by Seward, must have contained a 0 too much. What the Duke of Buckingham told Bishop Burnet, that Nell's first demand on the king was five hundred a year, which he rejected; but that in about four years afterwards, she had managed to obtain more than sixty thousand pounds, goes far to make up the one hundred thousand, which it is more generally allowed she died possessed of.

"The will and codicil, now first published, will set at rest many vague stories relative to the disposal of her property, which was bequeathed in the bulk to her only surviving son, Charles Beauclerc, Duke of St. Alban's. The will was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Dec. 7, 1687, and the original given up to Sir Robert Sawyer, on the 18th of Feb. following. The documents in the archieves of the Court are official copies, with an autograph receipt for the original, by Sir Robert Sawyer, attached. Any reference to the depository of the original, has eluded my particular inquiries.

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" The Will of Mrs. Ellen Gwynne.

" In the name of God, Amen. I, Ellen Gwynne, of the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-fields, and county of Middlesex, spinster, this 9th day of July, Anno Domini 1687, do make this my last will and testament, and do revoke all former wills. First, in hopes of a joyful resurrection, I do recommend myself whence I came, my soul into the hands of Almighty God, and my body unto the earth, to be decently buried, at the discretion of my executors, hereinafter named, and as for all such houses, lands, tenements, offices, places, pensions, annuities, and hereditaments whatsoever, in England, Ireland, or elsewhere, wherein I, or my heirs, or any to the use of, or in the trust for me or my heirs, hath, have, or may or ought to have, any estate, right claim or demand whatsoever, of fee-simple or freehold, I give and devise the same all and wholly to my dear natural son, his Grace the Duke of St. Alban's, and to the heirs of his body; and as for all and all manner of my jewels, plate, household stuff, goods, chattels, credits, and other estate whatsoever, I give and bequeath the same, and every part and parcel thereof, to my executors hereafter named, in, upon, and by way of trust for, my said dear son, his executors, administrators, and assigns, and to and for his and their own sole use and peculiar benefit and advantage, as in such manner as is hereafter expressed; and I do hereby constitute the Right Hon. Lawrence Earl of Rochester, the Right Hon. Thomas Earl of Pembroke, the Hon. Sir Thomas Sawyer, Knight, his Majesty's Attorney General, and the Hon. Henry Sidney, Esq. to be my executors of this my last will and testament, desiring them to please to accept and undertake the execution hereof, in trust, as afore-mentioned; and I do give and bequeath to the several persons in the schedule hereunto annexed, the several legacies and sums of money therein expressed or mentioned; and my further will and mind, and any thing above notwithstanding, is, that if my said dear son happen to depart this natural life without issue then living, or such issue die with issue, then and in such case, all and all manner of my estate devised to him, and in case my said natural son die before the age of one-and-twenty years, then also all my personal estate devised to my said executors, not before then by my said dear son and his issue, and my said executors, and the executors or administrators of the survivor of them, or by some of them otherwise lawfully and firmly devised or disposed of, shall remain, go, or be to my said executors, their heirs, executors, and administrators respectively, in trust of and for answering, paying and satisfying all and every and all manners of my gifts, legacies and directions that at any time hereafter, during my life, shall be by me anywise mentioned or given or by any codicils or schedule to be hereto annexed. And lastly, that my executors shall have, all and every

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of them, 100*l.* a-piece, of lawful money, in consideration of their care and trouble herein, and furthermore, all their several and respective expenses and charges in and about the execution of this my will. In witness of all which, I hereunto set my hand and seal, the day and year first above written. "E. G."

"Signed, sealed, published and declared, in the presence of us, who, at the same time, subscribe our names, also in her presence.

"Lucy Hamilton Sandys, Edward Wyborne, John Warner, William Scarborough, James Booth."

On a separate sheet, as a codicil, is—

"The last request of Mrs. Ellen Gwynn to his Grace the Duke of St. Alban's, made October the 18th. 1687.

"1. I desire I may be buried in the church of St. Martin's-in-the-fields.

"2. That Dr. Tenison may preach my funeral sermon.

"3. That there may be a decent pulpit-cloth and cushion given to St. Martin's-in-the-fields.

"4. That he would give one hundred pounds for the use of the poor of the said St. Martin's and St. James's, Westminster, to be given into the hands of the said Dr. Tenison, to be disposed of at his discretion, for taking any poor debtors of the said parish out of prison, and for cloaths this winter, and other necessaries, as he shall find most fit.

"5. That for showing my charity to those who differ from me in religion, I desire that fifty pounds may be put into the hands of Dr. Tenison and Mr. Warner, who, taking to them any two persons of the Roman religion, may dispose of it for the use of the poor of that religion inhabiting in the parish of St. James's aforesaid.

"6. That Mrs. Rose Forster, may have two hundred pounds given to her, any time within a year after my decease.

"7. That Jo., my porter, may have ten pounds given him.

"My request to his Grace is, further—

"8. That my present nurses may have ten pounds each, and mourning, besides their wages due to them.

"9. That my present servants may have mourning each, and a year's wages, besides their wages due

"10. That the Lady Fairborne, may have five pounds given her to buy a ring.

"11. That my kinsman, Mr. Cholmley, may have one hundred pounds given to him, within a year after this date.

"12. That his Grace would please to lay out twenty pounds yearly, for the releasing of poor debtors, out of prison, every Christmas-day.

"13. That Mr. John Warner may have fifty pounds given him to buy a ring.

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"14. That the Lady Hollyman may have the pension of ten shillings per week, continued to her during the said lady's life."

"Oct. 18, 1687.—This request was attested and acknowledged, in the presence of us—John Hetherington, Hannah Grace, Daniel Dyer."

"Dec. 5, 1687.—I doe consent that this paper of request may be made a codicil to Mrs. Gwynne's will.

"ST. ALBAN'S."

"A writer in *The Champion*, June 3rd, 1742, No. 398, on 'the Fraudulent Practices of Parish Vestries, and in particular that of St. Martin's-in-the-fields,' observes, 'I cannot forbear mentioning one action more laid to the charge to these honest men, viz.—Nell Gwyn, player, left a handsome income yearly to St. Martin's, on condition, that on every Thursday evening in the year, there should be six men employed, for the space of one hour in ringing, for which they were to have a roasted shoulder of mutton and ten shillings for beer; but this legacy is of late diverted some other way, and no such allowance is now given.'

"No authority, beyond report, appears for this assertion.

"Persons incarcerated for debt in Whitecross-street prison, that being the county gaol for Middlesex, have some allowance, on a particular day in the year, which is denominated Nell Gwynne's Bounty, but whence this arises, or how paid, I have yet to learn."

All the characters in the comedy, with but two exceptions, and allowing the story that the first lover of Nell was really an old lawyer, figured in the time of Charles the Second. For the introduction of *Orange Moll* (so inimitably acted by Mr. KEELEY,) the author pleads the authority of Pepys, who in the following passage, proves the then existence and notoriety of some such personage:—"It was observable how a gentleman of good habit sitting just before us, eating of some fruit in the midst of the play, did drop down as dead, being choked; but with much art Orange Mal did thrust her finger down his throat, and brought him to life again." In another place Pepys speaks of Sir W. Penn and himself having a long talk with "Orange Mal." A dramatic liberty has been taken with the lady's name, Moll being thought more euphonic than "Mal" or "Matilda." The incident of the king supping at a tavern with Nell, and finding himself without money to defray the bill, is variously related in the Chroniques Scandaleuses of his "merry" and selfish days.

In conclusion, the author has to return his thanks to all who aided the representation of his drama, and to the management for every wish and care to perfect the illusion of the scene.

D. J.

Little Chelsea, July 17, 1833.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

King Charles the Second	MR. JONES.
Sir Charles Berkeley	MR. FORESTER.
Charles Hart } Managers of the King's Theatre, Drury Lane, 1667.	MR. DURUSET.
Major Mohun } Managers of the King's Theatre, Drury Lane, 1667.	MR. PERKINS.
Betterton { Manager of the Duke's Theatre, Lincoln's Inn }	MR. DIDDEAR.
Joe Haynes	MR. MEADOWS.
Counsellor Crowsfoot	MR. BLANCHARD.
Stockfish	MR. F. MATTHEWS.
Boy	MASTER MACDONALD.

WOMEN.

Nell Gwynne	MISS TAYLOR.
Orange Moll	MR. KEELEY.
Mrs. Snowdrop	MRS. DALY.

This Comedy was first represented on the 9th of January, 1833.

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NELL GWYNNE.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

NELL GWYNNE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter MRS. SNOWDROP, *followed by* JOE HAYNES.

Mrs. SNOWDROP. Mr. Haynes, do you know what character is?

HAYNES. I do, Mrs. Snowdrop, in all its varieties; 'tis at the best an ostentatious superfluity. Character! That may be called our first year of discretion, in which we learn to live without it.

Mrs. S. 'Tis just like you of the King's Play-house.

HAYNES. Nay, I'm no longer of the King's Play-house; they've cast me out of the community.

Mrs. S. Cast out!—For what?

HAYNES. My religion.—T'other day, I sent a ship-parson with a bell to call manager Hart and his actors to prayers: the manager swore at my piety, and straight dis-

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charged me: I'm a martyr of the last new make: if one day Joe Haynes be not in the calendar, then do they manufacture saints as we make knights; not from desert, but court favour. My sanctity brings me to my errand. This girl—Mistress Ellen Gwynne—

Mrs. S. Poor thing! I do believe she has hardly a friend in the world.

HAYNES. I'm a benefactor on a grand scale—I mean my Lord Buckhurst,—

Mrs. S. But then she has a heart for a queen.

HAYNES. And an ankle for Venus, no doubt.—When shall we see her?

Mrs. S. Pretty Nelly, she's quite a lamb.—Could I but see her well married; could I but discover an honest man—

HAYNES. Aye, but only think of the uncertainty.

Mrs. S. A plain-going citizen—

HAYNES. Plain-going!—Where will you find one? unless, indeed, you count among the livery, the wooden men of Saint Dunstan's? Since Charles hath come back, the city hath grown ashamed of its plainness, and stands begging at Whitehall for cast off ruffs and feathers.—Now, my lord Buckhurst,—

Mrs. S. You see, Mr. Haynes, I'm a lone widow with nothing left but my reputation.

HAYNES. Poor destitute thing!

Mrs. S. And though I do let lodgings, my husband, Balaam Snowdrop, was once very high as a roundhead.

HAYNES. (*Aside.*) Thrice very high—and each time in the pillory.

Mrs. S. Nay, would you believe it, closely concerned with Barebones?

HAYNES. I can easily believe it—(*aside.*) since he

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married you. But for Mistress Gwynne, something must be done to fix her fortunes?

Mrs. S. So she said last night.—You see, she has run away from a lady whose companion she was, because she wouldn't listen to some lawyer man, old and ugly no doubt: dear Nelly, she is such a kind hearted thing!

HAYNES. But last night?

Mrs. S. Well, last night, as I was saying, she made me—the lord knows against my will—but then she smiled so, and bade me take a mouthful of strong waters, for I had been thinking of my dear Baalam, and—

HAYNES. Damn Balaam!—No, I abhor unnecessary swearing;—pass Balaam, and come to Nelly.—What was't she made you do?

Mrs. S. Carry a letter to the Duke's Play-house, to Mr. manager Betterton.

HAYNES. To what end?

Mrs. S. To ask him to come and hear her read play-books. You may well look; nothing now will serve her but to go upon the stage. 'Tisn't my fault: I'm sure I put the pious Mr. Muggleton under her pillow every night.

HAYNES. And Betterton?

Mrs. S. He's with her now: they have been doing what they call a scene; but you may be sure I was present: and there Nelly played the queen of—of—I forget what,—but she talked of racks, and daggers, and poisons, and cutting off people's heads,—oh, if she'd been born a queen, it couldn't have come more natural to her!

HAYNES. A heroine ready made for Dryden!

Mrs. S. And then to see how beautifully she faints,—and how in a minute she'll drown her face with tears!—I've

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known hundreds of women try as much, but none like Nelly.—And then she sings,—sings as if nightingales,—

(NELL GWYNNE *is heard to sing without*—)

" My lodging it is on the cold ground,
" And very hard is my fare,
" But that which troubles me most, is
" The unkindness of my dear.
" Yet still I cry, Oh, turn, love,
" And I prythee, love, turn to me;
" For thou art the man that I long for,
" And alack! what remedy?"

HAYNES. Sings! If that voice do not fill a pit—do not lead the gallants by the ears!—we must see her. Eh! here's Betterton; stand aside—(*puts Mrs. Snowdrop off.*) Now, for the humility of a cast-off actor to a manager in full play.

(*Enter* BETTERTON.)

Mr. Betterton, your most humble servant.

BETTER. What, Joe! again on the world?—Why, man, how dost live?

HAYNES. Live sir?—by hand and knife: one night I pick a pocket, the next I cut a throat. I have a consuming desire to end my life at the gallows!

BETTER. May your desires be gratified! But why, Joe, at the gallows?

HAYNES. I'd fain cast discredit on the rest of the players. My dying speech shall be a second Cromwell to you, and turn your theatres to conventicles; and (*mock heroically*) as the stage first saw the light in the waggon of Thespis, so shall it close its eyes in the Tyburn cart of Joseph Haynes.

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BETTER. Nay, cheat the hangman, and spare us. (*looking at watch.*) But I shall be late at rehearsal. *(going.)*

HAYNES. Mr. Betterton. So, you are going to fire the town with another Helen?

BETTER. On my life, no.

HAYNES. Come, you managers are so close. Have you no wonder?—No speaking doll from France?—No new treble from Italy?—Have you shipped no unicorn—set no bird-trap for the phœnix?

BETTER. 'Twixt ourselves, Davenant is about to cut down, and put music to Othello, to make it pass for a night or two.

HAYNES. Music to Othello, cut down! I see; he takes away the golden wires of Apollo, and puts in their place his own cat-gut.

BETTER. Nay, Davenant has improved Shakspeare; in fact, made some of the bard's plays his own.

HAYNES. Yes; as the grand Turk makes prisoners his own—by mutilation. But have you no new actress? Come, there's the syren in this house?

BETTER. She! phoo—raw, quite raw!

HAYNES. Hang it! 'tis said she's very beautiful.

BETTER. Humph.

HAYNES. And sings like—

BETTER. All women sing,—good morning.

HAYNES. You'll repent your judgment.

BETTER. 'Tis the cry of every one I refuse: repentance with me, as with yourself, Joe, is late coming; for I have had no qualms as yet. Farewell, Joe; and, hark ye, have pity on the poor actors, and eschew hanging.

HAYNES. But if I persist, I shall at least have at my execution, what hath long been a rarity at the Duke's playhouse.

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BETTER. What's that?

HAYNES. A full audience.

BETTER. A merry one, I warrant.

HAYNES. Not so; my death, like your comedies, will raise the price of pocket-handkerchiefs.

BETTER. Farewell, mad Joe.

HAYNES. Farewell, reasonable Tom. (*Exit* BETTERTON.) And now, if it be possible, to get an interview with Mistress Nelly. (*Exit.*)

SCENE II.

The Shew-room in the house of MADAME CHARRETT, *Milliner, Covent Garden: gowns, boddices, and various articles of female dress displayed on stands.*

Discovered, KING CHARLES *sitting, looking off into another room; he is plainly habited.*—SIR CHARLES BERKELEY *waiting.*

CHAR. Well done, Madame Charrett!—That's the tenth letter exchanged within half the number of minutes. Why, Berkeley, this is no milliner's, but the post-office.

BERK. Madame's establishment combines the two. I told your majesty, that—

CHAR. Softly, Berkeley; milliners have ears. (*Looking out*) Look there! another!—Didst ever see so insidious a bit of paper? Sealed with a stag I warrant me. Bravo! another!—That's from a courtier; long, narrow and scented; a very musk-rat of epistles.—That's from an alderman's wife; with wax enough on't for the privy seal. If the stationers' company do not give Madame Charrett their freedom commerce is dead to gratitude.

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BERK. Your majesty, as I live there's Ned Kynaston, the actor!

CHAR. And there! yes—he—the rope-dancer!—Od's fish! his name?—Jacob Hall! Ha! ha!

BERK. And letters for each!

CHAR. A golden Jacob, now, to know the writers!

BERK. Some dry-salter's wife.

CHAR. Tut, man! I'll be sworn maids of honour at the least. *(they rise)* 'Twas but last week I met a certain young countess in the Mall;—she had in her coach, as she said, a country maiden, a poor curate's daughter, all bashfulness and blushes.—As we talked, up came my lady's short sighted lord: to him she told the self-same story; when his lordship said he had ever loved the clergy; chucked the fluttering damsel under the chin, and went his way to play a match at bowls.—Now, who dost think the maiden really was?

BERK. A curate's daughter.

CHAR. Ned Kynaston, the actor, fresh from the play-house, drest in his woman's clothes! Ha! ha! Why, who comes here?

BERK. 'Tis the old counsellor.

CHAR. Old, indeed;—where has he left his scythe and hour-glass?

BERK. Madame's house, as I told your majesty, is an office for stray doves. The counsellor comes, as I hear, to learn about a runaway, a pretty wench.

CHAR. A pretty wench?

BERK. One Nell Gwynne.

CHAR. Nell Gwynne! and who is she?

BERK. A girl, 'tis said, of wit and spirit, who took fright at the counsellor's wrinkles; ran from the man of law as from a Russian frost.—Your majesty shall see some sport.

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CHAR. If the knave do not know me?

BERK. But condescend to remain my cousin, new from the country—for the tale has served with Madame Charrett—and we may outface his knowledge even if he have any.

(*Enter* COUNSELLOR CROWSFOOT *from back.*)

Good morning, counsellor.

CROWS. (*aside.*) Sparks here!

CHAR. Is't not a shame?

CROWS. Shame! What's a shame?

CHAR. That Nestor still should have a tooth for sugar-plums? Have you found her, sir; or has poor Madame Charrett been led astray by a false description?—Were her eyes meltingly blue?—

BERK. Or piercingly black?—

CHAR. Or had she one or two?—

BERK. Did her locks shame the raven's wing?—

CHAR. Or the robin's throat?—

BERK. Did she swim like Venus?—

CHAR. Or limp like her spouse?—Or, after all, art certain 'tis really a woman whom you seek?

CROWS. Humph! a grave man cannot enter a house for business—

BERK. Business! Oh, a suit at law for Madame Charrett!

CHAR. Some one hath libelled the milliner's last new skirt, or pirated the architecture of the pocket-holes!—Business with the milliner! Come, Rhadamanthus, what business?

CROWS. Cannot give an order for a few ruffles and neck-bands—

BERK. Certainly, ruffles and neck-bands!

CHAR. Yes, the counsellor looks as though his errand was

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for muslin.—(*aside to* BERK.) I hear the rustling of a petticoat.—Can it be to old Bracton here? let's watch.

BERK. Counsellor, may you one day be lord chancellor!—

CHAR. And so, exercise a care for widows and orphans! that is—for ruffles and neck-bands!

(CHARLES *and* BERKELEY *retire at back*).

CROWS. Coxcombs! Sugar-sops! They're gone, though. The milliner takes my money, and gives me nought but promises. Hang the girl! To slip through my fingers, when I thought she would relent; to be gulled at my age! —Madame Charrett promised to come—said she had—

(NELL GWYNNE *without*).

Very well, madam; I'll just take one peep, at the silks!

CROWS. Why, it is Nelly! As I am a lawyer, her very voice takes forty years from my back! Stay—she sha'n't see me at first, lest she fly off again.—This gown may serve me;—oh! Nelly, Nelly! (CROWSFOOT *hides himself behind one of the gowns, which he wraps about him.*)

(*Enter* NELL GWYNNE *from back.*)

NELL. Dear heart! why what a world of silk and lace! How beautiful! If it isn't enough to turn's one head to look at it. But I mus'n't stop. No! Mr. Betterton gave me no hopes; and now, nothing is left me but the play and the orange-basket Well, that with honesty and my good spirits may serve me yet;—for I have a thought that I shall yet surprize 'em—that I shall yet shine upon the stage—that I shall—(*turning to gown which hides the counsellor*) why, bless me! what a pretty gown!—Now, if I had money, this gown, above all other gowns I'd buy;—what a damask!—what a a flow of skirt!—How I should love this gown!

CROWS. (*Discovering himself*). You shall have the gown!

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NELL. Ha!—(*Screaming, and running away.*)

CROWS. Don't I tell you, you shall have the gown?

NELL. Yes, sir, but then it must be without the lining.

CROWS. Now, Nelly, let me plead—

NELL. Nay, if you're for pleading, put the gown on again. I'm sure 'tis fitter for you than your own.

CROWS. Nelly, Nelly, art not shocked to look at me?

NELL. Oh! sir, I always was.

CROWS. Why didst run away from the lady?

NELL. Because I could not honestly listen to the gentleman.

CROWS. Come, thou hast known me long and must love me.

NELL. La, sir! I've known the giants at Guildhall still longer, yet care not a pin about 'em.

CROWS. Giants, my dear, I am no giant.

NELL. No, sir!

CROWS. I—I confess—I'm not in the veriest flower of my days:—what then?—Still I am gay and flourishing—green and cheerful like the holly at Christmas.

NELL. To be sure, sir, and the holly is very well;—but—I—I prefer the misletoe.

CROWS. A challenge to battle!

NELL. Not to you.—Your age exempts you from service.

CROWS. Now, Nelly, thou wouldst not throw my years in my face?

NELL. Why should I?—Are they not there already.

CROWS. Hast thou no gratitude?—and is not love the same?

NELL. Oh, dear no!—Gratitude's a snow-ball; love's a fire; make 'em meet and they kill one another.

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CROWS. Now, Nelly! (*taking her hand.*) Dear Nelly—od's life! I do doat to look in your eyes.

NELL. It says much for your courage.

CROWS. How, love?—how?

NELL. Because you must see yourself there.

CROWS. Come, where hast been, Nelly?—Unprotected in this wicked town?—Thou shouldst not be alone.

NELL. I've thought so some time, sir.

CROWS. Thou'rt a lily that needs support.—What think you of a husband?

NELL. Think sir?—(*aside*). Now I'll teaze him.—Why, a good husband above all things—

CROWS. Yes! yes!

NELL. But good husbands are so scarce.

CROWS. You may light on a husband—kind—good.—

NELL. I am sure of that.

CROWS. What then?—after all, 'tis a match?—You have found the man?

NELL. Yes, sir; and married him last week.

CROWS. Married!

NELL. 'Twas such a thing to be unprotected in this wicked town.

CROWS. Last week!

NELL. And being a lily, needing support, I took for a prop—

CROWS. The furies!

NELL. A handsome young mercer of Bishopsgate.

CROWS. Come, you jest, Nelly;—let me beg—see me on my knees, asking for——

(CHARLES *and* BERKELEY *come down*).

CHAR. Ruffles and neck-bands! Thou piece of jaundiced parchment! thou antique edition of the criminal laws!

CROWS. Sirrah! this abuse—the law!

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CHAR. You say well, the law !—Doctors' commons, sir !

BERK. A man of your cloth and years !

CHAR. With my own wife too !

NELL. } Wife !
CROWS. }

CHAR. I am her injured husband. Can you deny it?

CROWS. I know not as for husband;—certainly, you look the mercer.

CHAR. See I do not furnish you with a neckband. And you, Nelly ! Oh Nelly ! Nelly !

NELL. (*aside*). Hang the fellow !—his impudence is charming.

CHAR. After one week ! What will they say of us in Bishopsgate-without?—with such a leaf of black-letter too? —Old, torn and dog's-eared ?

BERK.—A title page of the statutes with nothing left but the date ?

CHAR. A collection of flaws, and each one fatal to a suit in love ! But come, Nelly, let's kiss and be friends— we'll go home.

NELL. Home !—(*aside*). Well, let me get from my old persecutor, I warrant me, I'll trick my new gallant. As you will, love; I came to Madame Charrett's about the— the—rose-coloured satin. What is to be the price, dear ?

CHAR. Why, when madame deals, cost price.—(CROWS-FOOT *approaches.*)—Old gentleman, freeze in one spot ; or by the honour of the mercers' company, I'll send you to practise in the courts below !

CROWS. But, Nelly !—can it be ?

CHAR. Doubt, and thou diest. Nelly ! (*introducing her*) Mistress Ellen Tissue of the—the—

NELL. Golden Lamb !

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CHAR. Bishopsgate-without! Velvets, new from Genoa, lace, from France, and—

NELL. Ruffles and neckbands at the lowest charge.

CHAR. (*To* CROWSFOOT *who follows*). Back, old Parr!—"Gregory (*to* BERKELEY), out with thy blade!" If that Icelander—

CROWS. Icelander!

CHAR. Move a foot,—like a good citizen, cry, *Domine, dirige nos!*—and make thy sword hilts knock against his short ribs. (*Exit with* NELLY.)

CROWS. But it's a lie—I know it's a lie!

BERK. What! A lie to a liveryman! (*drawing*). 'Twould make the dagger leap from the city arms!

CROWS. I am a lawyer—and—a—counsellor!

BERK. Be moderate; seek not to add to their great profits the trade of sheep-stealer.

CROWS. Sheep-stealer!

BERK. Touch not our golden lamb! As a counsellor, thou mayest in time hope to carry off the woolsack;—but lay no finger on the fleecy hosiery of Bishopsgate-without. Back, back, I say!—(*Exit* BERKELEY, CROWSFOOT *following*.

SCENE III.

Exterior of Drury-Lane Theatre in 1667.

Enter CHARLES.

CHAR. Od's fish! she didn't sink through the earth, or take flight over the house tops; yet, as I'm a Christian king, know I not how or where the baggage went.—What an eye she has!—the pair worth the crown jewels. I must put Berkeley on the scent.

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(*Enter* BERKELEY.)

That girl—did she pass you?

BERK. What! escaped, your majesty?

CHAR. No hawk could be more certain of its swoop than I, when she glided through my hands like quicksilver, and left me to look at where she stood. Berkeley, you must find her.

BERK. A few golden words, your majesty, to Madame Charrett, and the game is ours. I left the old counsellor swearing most devoutly for revenge. It seems he would fain marry Nelly in earnest.

CHAR. That would be revenge indeed. Be it our paternal care to stay such vengeance. To the milliner's, Berkeley. —You will find me in the Play-house. Is not this one of the rogues?

BERK. One of your majesty's most impudent servants, Joseph Haynes.

(*Enter* HAYNES.)

CHAR. What, Joe! hast a holiday to day?

HAYNES. Your majesty—

CHAR. Hush, man! Let my majesty rest with your modesty. Why art not playing the fool inside?

HAYNES. Sir, I have become serious, and been turned from the troop.

CHAR. Serious, varlet! what, your tailor cries out for payment, and the mistress of the Roebuck points to the score?

HAYNES. For the tailor, sir, he is nought.—Morality forbids me to pay him.

CHAR. Aye, how so?

HAYNES. Tailors were brought into the world by sin: *ergo*,

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to pay a tailor, is to respect the origin of tailors.—A tailor I never pay.

CHAR. A sound, doctrinal reason. What is acted here to-day?

HAYNES. Something of Dryden's, your majesty; as full of heroics, as its dedication is full of—

CHAR. Lies. (*To* BERKELEY.) Poor John! he soars and flatters with equal genius. Such poets are like the snake in the Indian mythology; they not only fly but creep. Learn directly why this fellow has been discharged, and let me know. Berkeley, be vigilant; I shall wait for you. (*Exit.*

BERK. Call on me to-morrow, and I will hear your story.

HAYNES. If it shall please your lordship, now.—'Tis easily told.

BERK. But not heard. To-morrow, or—next day—or—next week.

HAYNES. His majesty said directly.

BERK. Which, translated from the vulgar, means one's easiest leisure. (*Exit.*)

HAYNES. Even so. Yet 'twill be a rare triumph over manager Hart, to go back under the royal seal; ticketted from Whitehall. Now to Lord Buckhurst; yet with poor hopes.—Nelly was not to be seen; had left the house; followed, it may be, turnspit Betterton. (*Retires.*)

Enter CROWSFOOT.

CROWS. A great thought! ha, ha!

HAYNES. (*Aside.*) Here's a lawyer merry—alack! for his clients.

CROWS. Let me see; four or five sturdy fellows, with a cool head to direct 'em; a trustworthy—(HAYNES *comes down*)—What! Joe Haynes of the King's?

HAYNES. Late of that establishment, Counsellor Crowsfoot.

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CROWS. Late!

HAYNES. Late, sir. I am destitute. If necessity, and not Joe Haynes, pick a pocket, I hope I may find a friend at the sessions?

CROWS. (*Aside.*) He's the very man. Joe, in all thy pranks, didst ever commit a robbery?

HAYNES. Never. Yet I have quick natural parts, and (*bowing*) with an example before me, I might flourish.

CROWS. I mean, didst thou ever steal a woman?

HAYNES. Steal! bless you, the dear creatures never reduced me to that extremity. Yet if a valued friend—

CROWS. Listen. A mad wench, whom I want to send back to her relations—friends of mine, in the country—is at the play-house here, as a fruit-girl.

HAYNES. It isn't Orange Moll?

CROWS. Orange Moll! pshaw!

HAYNES. To carry her off would take a troop of horse, with extra trumpets to drown her screams.

CROWS. That virago! Will you undertake the job?

HAYNES. Alone?

CROWS. No, with four or five stout hands, if you know such?

HAYNES. I do.

CROWS. And trusty?

HAYNES. They bear certificates.

CROWS. Certificates!

HAYNES. Wounds got in the service. They've tasted steel of every kind, from a duke's rapier to a 'prentice's cheese-knife.

CROWS. Secure the girl—I promise twenty pounds.

HAYNES. 'Tis scarce enough. I've known a beating with a poor cudgel fetch five. Indeed, five is the standard price.

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Sir Charles Sedley gave it to the gentlemen who licked Ned Kynaston for wearing clothes of the baronet's cut. Five's the market terms.

CROWS. And how, as in some cases, if the party's ears are cropped and his nose slit?

HAYNES. Nay, when gentlemen come to extras, 'tis left to their own delicate sense of honour. Well, I'll take your twenty pounds. Now, counsellor, you must confide.—What's the girl's name?

CROWS. Ellen;—Ellen Gwynne.

HAYNES. (*Aside.*) So so—this is Mrs. Snowdrop's lawyer-man! And you'd send her to her relations? Where may they live?

CROWS. Oh—Shropshire!

HAYNES. And the town? Nay, mutual confidence.—Shropshire;—but the town?

CROWS. Shrewsbury. I'll be at hand to point her out.

HAYNES. Are you sure she goes as a fruit-girl?

CROWS. Certain. I've just had the news from the milliner who finds the dress. When you have secured the wench—

HAYNES. We'll bring her to the Temple — to your chambers.

CROWS. Not for the world! I've a consultation there about a case in the Ecclesiastical Court. Take her to—to the Mitre Tavern; my clerk shall be there with the money.

HAYNES. The Mitre Tavern?

CROWS. Yes; the landlord's my client. Besides, the Shropshire waggon passes the house, and can take the girl up. (*Going.*)

HAYNES. But you'll come to the theatre?

CROWS. I'll be there straight.—The Mitre Tavern—I shall expect you. (*Exit.*)

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HAYNES. You shall expect me. Now, to earn twenty pounds—cheat a counsellor—and serve my Lord Buckhurst. (*Exit.*)

SCENE IV.

Interior of Drury-Lane Theatre. The stage forms a space at the back of the Pit. A man discovered lighting the candles.

Enter MAJOR MOHUN AND HART.

MOH. Upon my life, Hart, something must be done.

HART. Well, Mohun, isn't there our new play to-morrow, "The Conquest of Grenada?"—That must take the town—and, Major, we have hit upon a thought for the prologue, enough of itself to fill a pit.

MOH. I had a thought too. What say you if we could get back Goodman?

HART. What! after he has turned highwayman?

MOH. That's it: he's quite the fashion. Get him to give the prologue, and advertize that he will appear with the identical pistols with which he robbed the money-broker at Finchley.—Depend on't, the pistols would do more than the heroic verse.

HART. My plan is to have a fling at the other house. Nokes has lately drawn the town, and with what? Forsooth, a huge, broad-brimmed hat! Now, we'll have a hat big as a coach wheel; and in that hat the prologue shall be spoken. Here it is.

MOH. Why not get Joe Haynes to speak it?

HART. Haynes! That rogue is the disgrace of our calling. (*Enter first party of visitors to the Theatre.*)

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MOH. Well, Charles, take your own way.—So! the folks are dropping in.

HART. As neither you nor I act to-day, suppose we stop here, and, like thrifty managers, puff our new play among the audience for to-morrow?

ORANGE MOLL, (*without.*) Oranges, sweet ladies! Oranges, dear gentlemen!

MOH. There's Orange Molly's gentle voice. How they swarm about the beldam's basket!

(*Enter* ORANGE MOLL, *with orange basket, visitors follow, and continue at intervals to come in, with other Orange Girls.*)

MOLL. Oranges! The true Seville by my virtue! Buy, buy, my golden Spaniards! Never look, but taste, sweet gentlemen! Fair maidens, buy, and many husbands to you! Come, cavaliers, have none of you a Carolus?—Major Mohun, a good house to you! Lovely virgins, make your sweethearts buy, or never say yes for a twelvemonth! Charles Hart, your servant. Will nobody buy my Don Spaniards? Never look as though they were crabs! All sweet! sweet! sweet!—Balls of honey! balls of honey! as I'm an honest woman! Will nobody buy of Orange Mary?

HART. Mary—Ha! ha!

MOH. (*To* HART.) I've known her plain Moll these five-and-twenty years.

MOLL. If you have, Major Mohun, keep it to yourself: don't disgrace me with the acquaintance before company. Buy my oranges!

HART. Why, here comes Betterton.

Enter BETTERTON.

MOLL. Yes; Manager Betterton, of the Duke's—of the Duke's! He *is* a gentleman.

HART. What, Betterton! Come to spy or to steal?

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MOLL. Steal! There's little good he could steal here! No not even if he was to run off with the managers.

HART. (*To* MOLL.) The foul fiend's in your tongue. Will you be still?

MOLL. As still as Charles Hart's conscience when he has done cruel murder.

BETTER. Why, when does he murder, Moll?

MOLL. Whenever he goes upon the stage, when does he not? And doesn't Charles Hart crow about his family? A descent from Shakspeare!—He may say, descent:—from every thing to nothing and a little lower!

MOH. Molly, be silent.

MOLL. As silent as little Major Mohun, when the roundheads broke into the playhouse, and Molly smuggled him out in her basket, under the oranges. To be sure that was no great matter; for who could tell his lily face from one of these? (*Holding up an orange.*) See; between my finger and thumb, here's the little Major! Foul fiend! Whoop! I'll have revenge!

HART. Why, what wilt do Molly?

MOLL. Do! do!—I'll (*curtseying to* BETTERTON) go to the other house.

BETTER. Out, you slut!

(*Enter* CHARLES *and* BERKELEY—*they mix with the visitors.*)

MOLL. Slut! I was never slut nor spit at Whitehall. No, nor ever basted from the kitchen for embezzling sops in the pan. Slut! Rogues! I'll write your lives and give 'em to the pamphlet-sellers! Buy my oranges! Buy my little yellow majors! Slut!

CHAR. (*Aside to* BERKELEY.) The wench is not here. Art sure the milliner is true?

BERK. My life on't.—The girl was to be here with an orange basket.

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MOLL. (*Coming down to* CHARLES.) Buy my oranges—buy—(*aside.*) His Christian majesty, for all his plain clothes! Buy my Spaniards! Near neighbours of our blessed queen: buy, or you do not love her majesty.

CHAR. A plague on this sybil! (*to* BERKELEY.) Charles, get her off. (BERKELEY *engages* MOLL. HART *and* MOHUN *come down.*)

HART. His majesty!

CHAR. Not a word. It is my pleasure to remain unknown: see I am not intruded on. (*To* MAJOR.) So, my little Mohun, you have something new to-morrow, is it not so?

MOH. "The Conquest of Grenada," so please your—

CHAR. We shall attend: aye, and in state. Her majesty may, perhaps, accompany us.

MOLL. (*Coming down with* BERKELEY to CHARLES.) I'll be judged, if you're no cavalier, but a roundhead. I'll take this sweet gentleman for my witness! What! grudge sixpence a piece for my Spaniards? Sixpence for the neighbours of her blessed majesty?

NELL GWYNNE *sings without.* "Buy oranges."

BERK. (*To* CHARLES.) Madame Charrett is true, 'tis she. (*Enter* NELL GWYNNE, as *Orange Girl, with orange basket. She carries a mask.*)

NELL. (*Sings.*) "Buy oranges!" Ladies and cavaliers, vouchsafe to look at my basket! Maidens, ripen my fruit with your glances: buy my oranges, as bright as hope, and as sweet as courtship.—Though they look as hard as gold, they'll melt in the mouth like a lover's promise.—Their juice is syrup, and their coats as thin as a poet's. Buy, gentlemen; or I'll vow that, being jealous, you hate yellow even in an orange. (*Goes up.*)

MOLL. What pert minikin's this, with its lavender slipslop?

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BETTER. (*Aside.*) It is—I'd swear to her face—the very girl!

CHAR. (*Coming down with* NELLY.) And have your oranges really all these virtues?

NELL. (*Aside.*) So, my gallant mercer. All, and a thousand more;—there's nothing good that may not be said of the orange. It sets special examples to elder brothers, misers, and young travellers.

CHAR. Aye? What example to elder brothers?

NELL. This; though of full age, it dwells quietly on the same branch with bud and blossom.

CHAR. What doth it teach misers?

NELL. That golden coats should cover melting hearts.

CHAR. And, lastly, what may the young traveller learn of your orange?

NELL. This much; that he is shipped when green, that he may ripen on the voyage.

CHAR. Prettily lectured.

MOLL. Prettily! well, before I'd talk such snip-snip, as though my mouth was a button-hole cut in French muslin, I'd go in mourning for my tongue, and sew up my lips with black worsted!

HART. (*To* MOLL.) Silence, Sycorax! (*To* MOHUN.) This is the girl for our prologue.

BETTER. (*Aside.*) The king seems dazzled with this wench.—I must secure her for the Duke's.

NELL. But, gentlemen; fair gentlemen;—will no one lighten my basket? Buy my oranges!

SONG.—NELL GWYNNE.

Buy oranges!—No better sold,—
New brought in Spanish ships;
As yellow bright as minted gold,
As sweet as ladies' lips.

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Come, maidens, buy; nor judge my fruit
From beauty's bait—the skin;
Nor think like fops, with gaudy suit,
They're dull and crude within.
Buy oranges!

Buy oranges!—Buy courtiers, pray,
And as ye drain their juice,
Then, cast the poor outside away,
A thing that's serv'd its use;—
Why, courtier, pause; this truth translate,
Imprinted in the rind;
However gay the courtier's state,
'Tis yet of orange kind.
Buy oranges!

Buy oranges!—Coquetting fair,—
A sweet reproach come buy;
And, as the fruit ye slice and share,
Remember with a sigh—
A heart divided needs must cast
The faith which is its soul;
If, maidens, ye would have it last,
Give none—if not the whole.
Buy oranges!

(*The by-standers applaud.*)

MOLL. Well, ladies, (*to orange girls*) if we are to be squealed out of our calling by an interloper! (*Imitating* NELL.) "Buy oranges! Buy oranges!" (*All go up.*)

Enter CROWSFOOT.

NELL. (*Going towards him.*) Buy my—(*hiding face with mask.*) The counsellor!

CROWS. Stay, my pretty dear; I want to deal with you. —I want to buy—

NELL. Ruffles, or—

CHAR. (*Coming down.*) Neckbands?

CROWS. These jackanapes again!—(*aside.*) Where's Haynes?

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BERK. (*Urging him away.*) Counsellor—counsellor—I've a suit for you, counsellor.

CROWS. I want no suit—at my chambers, I—

BERK. Nay, sir, life and death are on't.

CROWS. If 'twere your hanging, I wouldn't budge.—If you were the king himself I wouldn't move.

BERK. And if you were the lord chief justice, you shouldn't stay.

CROWS. An assault—I'll indict!

BERK. Indict,—but come, (*forces him off.*)

NELL. (*Aside.*) Now, to make my escape.

HART. (*Following* NELL.) If you would but step this way—

BETTER. (*To* NELL.) Permit me again to wait upon you.

MOH. Mr. Hart and myself are desirous—

BETTER. Nay, sirs, but I have the first claim.

HART. } (*Keeping* BETTERTON *from* NELL.) Mr. Bet-
MOH. } terton! Mr. Betterton!

NELL. Lud, gentlemen! have you found such a jewel, that you must quarrel about it?

MOLL. A jewel! A thing for candle-light; else 'twou'dn't have a shade like this! (*snatching mask from* NELL's *hand.—To orange girls.*) Here, ladies! here's a toy for an orange girl! Minx! (*imitates* NELL) "Buy oranges!"

NELL. (*To* CHARLES.) Oh, save me from her tongue!

CHAR. Trust yourself, my little Pomona, to me: this will take us behind the scenes. Mohun, lead the way.—Nay, come; or that she-devil will raise the house.

NELL. Any where, for in truth I fear her nails. (*Exit with* CHARLES *and* MOHUN.)

HART. (*to* MOLL.) Art not ashamed to rate the young woman?

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MOLL. Woman! A chit! a baby face! If she's a woman, what am I?

Enter BOY.

BOY. (*to* HART.) Sir, it's the time.—Shall the music begin?

HART. I am coming. This girl must be ours.—Come, Betterton.

BETTER. (*aside*) What a fool was I to miss her! (*Bell rings and music is heard behind the scenes.*)

(*Exit with* HART.)

MOLL. A woman, forsooth! Why, look ye, ladies; if a mask's to make the difference, let us all be as black as Sandford's perriwig. (*puts mask to her face and walks about imitating* NELL.)

Enter HAYNES.

HAYNES. The counsellor says, she wears a mask—eh? (*sees* MOLL) Here she is (*advancing and making signs to her*). My love! I bear a message from a lord—a nobleman—who—

MOLL. (*aside.*) He takes me for that doll! A lord! no wonder they called her Pomona.—I'll trick her now.

HAYNES. (*advancing to her.*) Put your arm through mine —Don't tremble, you are with an honourable gentleman.

Music heard behind the scenes.

MOLL. I—I—

HAYNES. Not a word.—They're going to begin the play. —Hark! the music. Let us steal away quietly. Don't flutter—softly—softly—(*aside.*) and now for the Mitre and the twenty pounds. (HAYNES *leads* MOLL *off masked, as visitors take their seats in the pit, and the music is heard in orchestra.*

END OF ACT I.

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ACT II.—SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Mitre Tavern.

Discovered, NELL GWYNNE, CHARLES, *and* BERKELEY, *at Table.*

NELL. (*Rising.*) No,—not a minute longer.

CHAR. Nay, why wilt not take my word?

NELL. I have taken it, and found it counterfeit.—The cracked coin doesn't pass a second time.

CHAR. But—I promise—thou *shalt* go home.

NELL. So you promised when I left the theatre;—how is it that you brought me here?

CHAR. By accident.

NELL. Accident!

CHAR. Yes; through gazing on your eyes, I somehow lost my way: I was blinded by light.—Is not the excuse a fair one?

NELL. No; an owl would have made as good.—Farewell.

CHAR. Stay! we must not part so. Come, Nelly; thou dost not know me.—Now what dost think I am?

NELL. By my troth you are hardly worth a guess.

CHAR. Try.—What dost take me for?

NELL. An apothecary's 'prentice with just label Latin enough to tell camphor from cinnamon? No; your fea-

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tures are not learned enough for that. A money-lender's clerk? Oh no; that face would never get you such a place of trust. A ballad-writer? No; for though your cheek is blank enough for paper, you hav'n't quite a goose-quill look.

CHAR. Come; will my face fit no honest calling? say something.

NELL. Well then, in despair I decide.—There is a shallow neatness, a sort of brassy glitter in your air that—I know not what you are, if not a pin-maker.

CHAR. A pin-maker!

NELL. Nay, I've known pin-makers who'd see no compliment in the comparison. But if none of these, what are you?

CHAR. A gentleman,—upon my word,—a gentleman.

NELL. Is that all? Farewell.

CHAR. What would you have?—a gentleman and a soldier.

NELL. A soldier!

CHAR. Even so.—Now will you leave me?

NELL. A soldier! Well, I declare, this quite makes out a dream I had two mornings ago. You shall hear it.

CHAR. No dreams now: another time.

NELL. Now or never: listen.—I dreamt that I was riding in a fine golden coach with the king.

CHAR. With the king!

BERK. With the king!

NELL. You know, we do dream such strange things—with the king! Well, the coach stopped; when there came up a poor old soldier without any legs or arms; and of a sudden he held out his hand—

CHAR. What! without any arms?

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NELL. You know, it was only in a dream.

CHAR. Yes, Nelly; but you ought to dream according to anatomy.

NELL. I say, he held out his hand;—and, telling us, that he had no place to lay his old grey head upon, not a morsel of bread to put into his mouth, he begged for charity, while the tears came peeping into the corners of his eyes.

CHAR. Well?

NELL. I turned round to the king—for, bless you, I was altogether at my ease, no more afraid of him than I am of you,—and I said, "Charles!—"

CHAR. Charles!

BERK. Charles!

NELL. "Is it not a shame to let your old soldiers carry about their scars as witnesses of their king's forgetfulness?—is it not cruel that those who for your sake"—(*Unconsciously laying her hand upon the arm of* CHARLES.)

CHAR. For my sake?

NELL. You know, I'm supposing you the king.

CHAR. Oh, aye, aye!

NELL. "Who for your sake, have left some of their limbs in a strange country, should have no resting place for the limbs they have, in their own?"

CHAR. I see the end: the king relieved the soldier, and then you awoke?

NELL. No, I didn't: for I thought the coach went on towards Chelsea, and there—

CHAR. Well, what happened at Chelsea?

NELL. There, I thought I saw a beautiful building suddenly grow up from the earth; and going in and coming out of it, just like so many bees, heaps of old soldiers, with

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their long red coats, and three-corner hats, and some with their dear wooden legs, and all with their rough faces looking so happy and contented,—that, when I looked and thought it was all my work, I felt as if I could have kissed every one of 'em round!

CHAR. When it came to that, of course you awoke?

NELL. No, I didn't;—not until I saw a place, with my picture hanging out for a sign. My head for a sign! what do you think of that?

CHAR. Think?—I can't think of the sign with the living lips before me. (*She avoids him.*) Nay, thou'rt a wild and beautiful bird.

NELL. Aye, he must be a cunning fowler who cages me.

CHAR. I can make the bars of gold.

NELL. If you'd hold the surer, better bend one of the gold bars into a ring. No other cage, no other net; a little fable hath taught me wisdom, you shall hear it.

SONG.—NELL GWYNNE.

"Little bird, little bird, have a care;"
Thus whisper'd a lark to her child;
"See, the fowler is spreading his snare,
"What makes ye thus noisy and wild?"
"Good mother," the silly one cried,
Conceitedly trimming its wing,—
"I've beauty and youth on my side,—
"Hang fowlers! I'll gambol and sing,
"Good mother,
"Hang fowlers! I'll gambol and sing."

"Little bird, little bird, not so near;"
In vain! "Now too late you'll regret:"
For the poor little bird, dead with fear,
A captive is ta'en in the net.

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The mother then sigh'd forth this truth,
Her little one fast in the string,—
" In prisons, what's beauty and youth?
" Fear fowlers, nor gambol nor sing."
" Oh, mother!"
" Fear fowlers, nor gambol nor sing!"

CHAR. I tell thee, Nelly, I am rich, abundantly rich—what dost think now?

NELL. Think!—that faces do not go with fortunes.

CHAR. Thou shalt be a queen—almost!

NELL. Almost! Saving the coronation and a few such ceremonies.

CHAR. I'll pour heaps of wealth into your lap; thou shalt be studded with diamonds; thou shalt tread on nothing baser than the richest damasks; music shall float about you; servants shall bow before you; all things shall come with your wish!

NELL. Let me have one now in earnest of the future.

CHAR. Name it.

NELL. Home!—Home now, and the damask and music afterwards. I will not be delayed, I insist—

Enter STOCKFISH.

STOCK. What cry is this in the Mitre? Did ye call for the bill? (NELL *retires up.*)

CHAR. Bill!

STOCK. Ye have feasted right lusciously, and here is the account thereof. (*Gives bill to* CHARLES.)

CHAR. (*Aside to* BERKELEY—*giving the bill.*) Pay this puritanical bag-pipe.

BERK. (*Aside to* CHARLES.) Your majesty,—I—

CHAR. Pay. Why dost not pay the knave?

BERK. (*Aside to* CHARLES.) Has your majesty no money? I have one.

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CHAR. 'Sdeath, not my own likeness, even in copper. (*Takes bill.*) Four pounds three and two-pence.

STOCK. Pullets are dear, and ye did command the choicest claret.

CHAR. (*Aside.*) How perplexing! (*To* STOCKFISH.) You see, my friend—

STOCK. I do see, that thy belly hath not taken counsel of thy pocket.

NELL. (*Coming down.*) What is all this? Oh, the bill! Well, pay the good man. (*Taking bill from* CHARLES.) Four pounds three and two-pence. Why, 'tisn't a grain from one of the heaps of gold to be poured into my lap.

CHAR. You see, both myself and friend have forgotten our purses.

NELL. If you have no money, leave as a surety one of the diamonds with which I am to be studded;—a very little one will serve the reckoning.

CHAR. (*Aside.*) I'd almost give one from my crown to be well out of this!

NELL. I'm sure the charges are most reasonable. (*Reading bill.*) "Three pullets, five and fourpence." You never bought them cheaper at market. "Rein-deer's tongue, two and a penny. A venison pasty, three and two-pence." How deer's flesh can be sold for the money, I know not; unless, indeed, 'tis stolen from one of the royal parks.

CHAR. (*Aside.*) In which case, certainly, the pasty should come to me for nothing.

NELL. "Sugar-sops and fish, two and sixpence;" which, with claret, sauce, tarts, ale, bread, and wax candles, amount exactly to four pounds three and two-pence of his majesty's current money.

CHAR. Certainly, of his majesty's money.—(*Aside.*)—if his majesty had it.

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NELL. As they say in the play-book, "pay the Jew his principal and let him go."

STOCK. I am no Jew, but a plain-going, simple-spoken, guileless Christian; nevertheless, I will go, on the receipt of my principal.

NELL. (*To* CHARLES.) Now, my good diamond-merchant!—

CHAR. (*To* STOCKFISH.) The fact is, I must make a friend of you.

STOCK. Not on credit. If ye do not pay, ye shall be locked up in the roundhouse forthwith.

NELL. (*To* CHARLES.) Give the man your place of residence, and let him call for the money.

STOCK. Have you a reputable place of dwelling?

CHAR. I—I—(*Aside to* BERKELEY.) Answer for me. (*Goes up.*)

BERK. My good fellow, never mind the dwelling. Suffer my friend to depart; I will remain in your custody until the money arrives.

STOCK. May I be sure?

CHAR. (*Coming down.*) Religiously sure: besides, I'll reward you with—

NELL. Diamonds—richest damask—and music floating about him!

STOCK. (*Opening door in scene.*) If ye open yonder door, a passage will lead ye to my master's private room: he will doubtless agree.

CHAR. Dull blockhead, why didst not say so before? (*Pointing to an inner room.*) That door?

STOCK. That door! (CHARLES *and* BERKELEY *enter the room in scene, when* STOCKFISH *immediately closes and locks the door upon them.*)

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NELL. You never mean to make prisoners?—

CHAR. (*Knocking at door.*) Why, drawer, that door is locked!—

STOCK. Barred and bolted; and so is this. (*Bolting the door.*)

CHAR. Varlet! what is't ye mean—to cheat us?

STOCK. No; I mean that ye should not cheat me. (*Going.*)

NELL. You will never be so barbarous—you cannot?—

STOCK. I can—I will! (*Exit.*)

NELL. (CHARLES *knocks.*) Patience, prisoners; your keeper is gone.

CHAR. The rascal!—I'll tear the house about his ears.

NELL. Don't begin these two minutes—for then I shall be out of it.

CHAR. Nelly, thou wouldst not leave me?

NELL. Leave you! (CROWSFOOT *heard without.*) The counsellor again! Oh, my fate! (*To* CHARLES.) I have it—remain quiet but for a while, and I'll release you.

Enter CROWSFOOT.

CROWS. She's there! she's safe!—she's—(*seeing her.*) Nelly!

NELL. Sir!

CROW. (*Aside.*) She doesn't look angry—she doesn't storm at being carried off! I own I have been violent.

NELL. Have you, sir?

CROWS. I was afraid I might have a little agitated you.

NELL. Oh dear, no, sir.—You judge yourself too rashly. (*Aside.*) What can he mean?

CROWS. But now, now, we're alone, with not a soul to—

CHAR. (*Knocking at door.*) Nelly, Nelly!

CROWS. Your name—who's that?

BERK. (*Knocking within.*) Nelly!

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CROWS. Another! why, they know you! Who are they? How came they here? Speak!

NELL. They—they came with me.

CROWS. With you?

NELL. That is, they brought me here; certainly, against my will.

CROWS. (*Aside.*) Oh, I see; they're Joe Haynes's journeymen. No more of that, sweet Nelly; no reproaches.

BERK. (*Knocking.*) Nelly, have you got the money?

CROWS. Money, what money?

NELL. If you must know, money I was going to borrow to pay the gentlemen's score; for which they are now locked up.

CROWS. Score! What's the amount?

NELL. Four pounds three shillings and two-pence. Here's the bill. (*Giving it.*)

CROWS. (*Reading bill.*) "Pullets, tongue, claret!" (*Aside.*) Well, for ruffians who live by their cudgels, they've palates for lords! And you'd pay for the feast?

NELL. I would.

CROWS. What, then, you bear no malice towards the rogues?

NELL. They deceived me, certainly; but what's the use of malice?

CROWS. That's well: go to your room;—and, for fear you should be seen, don't budge without your mask.—You shall pay the bill—here, here's my purse. (*She refuses.*) What? wilt not borrow of me? Why wilt not take my purse and with it my hand and heart?

NELL. Because the money I might repay, but for the hand and heart, they must fain die creditors,

CROWS. Not so—not so! Take the purse.

BERK. (*Within.*) Nelly!

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NELL. (*Aside.*) Yet there is no other way.

CROWS. Take it.

BERK. (*Within.*) Hast got the money ?

NELL. (*Taking the purse.*) Yes.

CROWS. And now to seal the loan—one kiss—one. (*Approaches* NELLY, *who runs under his arms, and meets* STOCKFISH.)

STOCK. Did ye call ?

NELL. The gentleman's bill is—

STOCK. Four pounds three shillings and two-pence.

NELL. (*Imitating* STOCKFISH.) Have you written in a fair, round, publican hand the receipt thereto ?

STOCK. Aye !

NELL. (*Counting money into his hand.*) One—two—three—four.—There, then, is your money—There, counsellor, is your purse,—what I have taken I will return.

STOCK. And here is the receipt—here the key.

CROWS. Which I will hold. Come hither. (*Takes* STOCKFISH *aside.*)

NELL. (*Going to door in scene.*) The bill is paid ! (*Going to room at side.*) Now, will I turn the key upon myself, watch my opportunity, and then, good bye, counsellor. (*Exit into room on left hand.*)

CROWS. (*To* STOCKFISH.) Fail not, but hasten the coach. (*Exit* STOCKFISH.) Well, the feast's paid for ; the gluttonous varlets ! and here's the key to let the gaol-birds fly. Nelly (*looking about*), Oh, gone to her room ! All the better, I'll—

Enter JOE HAYNES.

HAYNES. So, counsellor, I've found you ! I've been running all over the town after you : here is the wench !—Where's the twenty pounds ? Not a word,—come !

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CROWS. There (*giving it*) you have the money.

HAYNES. And in that room—(*pointing to door on right hand.*) you have the stolen goods. (*listening at door.*) Why, bless me, she's surely asleep.—Hark! you may hear her snore!

CROWS. Snore! you profane villain! Begone;—stop! The money has been easily earned?—You hav'n't had much trouble?

HAYNES. No. The business was managed very quietly and soberly.

CROWS. Quietly and soberly! What, after so much tongue and claret?

HAYNES. Claret?

CROWS. Such things your assistants have consumed; such things I have paid for! Here's the bill; here's the receipt; (*Giving them.* CHARLES *and* BERKELEY *knock violently at door.*) and there's your companions, knocking, to get out of limbo.

HAYNES. I forswear all companions.—"I am myself alone!"

CROWS. If there be a blush in you, I'll bring it to your face. (CHARLES *knocks.*) Coming, gentlemen, coming! Now, knave, own thyself exposed, for I will confront you with—(*opens door*—CHARLES *and* BERKELEY *run out.*)—the devils that haunt me!

CHAR. (*aside to* HAYNES.) Hush!—What, counsellor,—become gaoler at the Mitre?

CROWS. Mercers, forsooth! I thought they were fellows who lived by cudgels and cold steel. (*to* HAYNES.) Above all else, what fiend made you employ these?

HAYNES. Employ! Let the gentlemen speak for themselves;—did I?—

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CHAR. Of course, you employed us.

CROWS. (*to* HAYNES.) Can you deny it now?

HAYNES. (*bowing to* CHARLES.) Now, certainly not.

CROWS. A supper for *these!* But I won't pay!

HAYNES. You have paid. Gentlemen, acknowledge the counsellor's liberality. Here (*giving them to* CHARLES.) is the bill—and here the receipt.

CHAR. Many thanks, most liberal sir!—(CHARLES *and* BERKELEY *bow ceremoniously.*)

CROWS. Begone, fellows, begone; you have your hire! Share the twenty pounds and vanish! (*aside.*) If they stop I shall go mad. She sha'n't stir while they are here. (*watches room door on right hand.*)

CHAR. (*to* HAYNES.) Hire! Twenty pounds!—What does old frailty mean?

HAYNES. Your majesty, a simple love bargain, for carrying off a damsel—one Mistress Ellen Gwynne. I brought her from the theatre, and placed her in that room.

CHAR. Tut, man! you dream. I myself escorted pretty Ellen to this house.

HAYNES. Then, your majesty, I have blundered rarely; for, I vow, I brought somebody.

CHAR. Ha, ha, ha! No matter;—'twill be all the same to the counsellor. But stay; the real Nelly is somewhere here—he may trick us after all.

HAYNES. Never fear, your majesty; you shall yet see some sport—a scene from a Shropshire comedy.

CHAR. A Shropshire comedy!

HAYNES. A brief time will prepare the actors, and then—

CROWS. (*comes down.*) Will you never go?

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CHAR. We are gone, most liberal sir!—If, at a future time, there should be another lady to carry off,—

HAYNES. (*shaking the bag of money.*) Our terms are very moderate—

BERK. And secrecy inviolable.

HAYNES. Cudgelling performed in every variety, and ears cropped—

CHAR. With perfect satisfaction to the employer, and according to the last new fashion. (*Exeunt all but* CROWSFOOT.)

CROWS. They're gone—yes—there's their last step upon the staircase—I'll make sure of the door. (*bolts it.*) Now for my little prisoner. (*goes to door at right hand.*) Od's she has locked herself in;—the dear flutterer! Frightened, I dare say. My dear—my dear—you may come out now. (*listening.*) Why, as that rascal said, there is a sound like snoring, to be sure:—but, no,—it can't be.—Nelly—Nelly—(NELLY *opens left hand door and is coming out, but retreats on seeing* CROWSFOOT—*she watches him from door.*) She comes! —I hear her timid partridge foot run along the boards.

(*Enter* ORANGE MOLL *masked, from right hand room.*) Come along, my love! Sit down,—sit down.

MOLL. (*aside.*) The old villain!—And is this the lord?

CROWS. Masked! Never mind before me—put it away—let me look on the light. (MOLL *refuses.*) Well, if you wont! Why, don't you speak to me?—Come, sit—sit. (*places two old fashioned high-backed arm chairs—they sit.* Speak, love! (MOLL *coughs violently.*) Dear heart! What a cold. Ha! those nasty thin shoes.—But I have such presents for you, Nelly. (MOLL *coughs.*) A glass of wine, Nelly: here is a glass of claret—and it *is* paid for. (*Gives* MOLL *wine—she drinks.*—NELL *creeps round to* MOLL'S

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chair, whilst CROWSFOOT *is engaged at table—*MOLL *seeing her is about to exclaim—*)

NELL. (*aside to* MOLL.) Hush! You shall have all the presents.(*stands behind* MOLL'S *chair, unseen by* CROWSFOOT.)

CROWS. (*taking glass from* MOLL.) How do you feel now?

NELL. (*from behind chair.*) Another glass!

CROWS. To be sure. (*fills and gives to* MOLL, *she drinks.*) There—it revives you?

NELL. I think it does.—I'll take another. (MOLL *affects repugnance to* NELL.)

CROWS. Well said;—I like this;—it shews no silly squeamishness. You won't take another glass?

NELL. Yes I will;—nay, you may bring the bottle.

CROWS. No, Nelly; I can only spare another half glass. There—(*sits*) and now, Nelly, (*draws his chair closer to* MOLL'S,) what would you ask of me, what can I do for you?—Ask and have! I'm so delighted! Is there any thing in the world you want?—Speak! speak! speak! (*taking out watch.*) 'Tis growing late.

NELL. That's a very pretty watch of yours, counsellor; a lady's watch, is it not?

CROWS. My dear first wife's,—rest her soul! But 'tis yours, Nelly. (*Gives watch to* MOLL.)

NELL. What a beautiful ring on your finger!

CROWS. A mere nothing—a mere nothing. Now, Nelly!—

NELL. I never did see so pretty a ring.

CROWS. Hang it! Say no more about it! (*Gives* MOLL *the ring.*) Now, Nelly; now dove, let us talk about—

NELL. The presents—the presents you spoke of.

CROWS. Trifles;—a gown and—let us talk.

NELL. The gown now, and then the talk.

CROWS. I obey—I'll fetch them myself. (*Rises, and as*

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CROWSFOOT *gets up and is crossing towards door,* MOLL *moves the chair round so as to keep her face to him and the better to hide* NELL *behind.*) (*Aside.*) At the same time I can hurry the coach and bear her like a conqueror off. I'll fetch them—I'll fetch them! I sha'n't be long, my soul! (*Exit.*)

MOLL. (*embracing* NELL.) Kiss me, child! Pretty darling! what wit it has! Oh, Nelly, how may one woman be deceived in another! Now, the stars pardon me my bad words to you!

NELL. I forgive them;—only tell me how you came here?

MOLL. I suffered myself to be led away in your name.—Oh, my dear baby! you don't know the wickedness of this town—I do. I was shewn into that room, where I must have fallen asleep.—But how, my innocent, did you come here?

NELL. I thought I was going home, when I was cheated to this place.

MOLL. Cheated!—Well, let's be friends; though you take half my orange custom at the theatre.

NELL. Never fear; I am no longer your rival.—I have obtained all I ventured for;—for to-day I speak a prologue at the theatre!

MOLL. A prologue!—why,—hush!—

NELL. The counsellor! Hide, and this time leave him to me.

MOLL. But, my dear angel, the gown—

NELL. Gown and all shall be yours. Quick! (MOLL *retires into room at right hand.*)

Enter CROWSFOOT *with a box—fastens door.*

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CROWS. Here it is,—Nelly! What, (*puts box down,*) taken off thy mask? That's well!

NELL. What gown can it be?

CROWS. What gown? The gown you admired at Madame Charrett's!

NELL. Why, you have never bought it?

CROWS. Bought it to surprise you; and head-gear to suit. Thou shalt dress like an empress, Nelly. See (*taking gown from box,*) here's the gown! (MOLL *comes down between* NELLY *and* CROWSFOOT.)

CROWS. Here it is, be happy and take it!

MOLL. (*twitching it away.*) I will!

CROWS. In the devil's name, what witch is this?

MOLL. (*taking off her mask.*) Witch! No more a witch than thou'rt conjuror.

CROWS. That hag of the pit, Orange Moll!

MOLL. Hag! Why, thou superannuated pounce-box! Thou piece of faded red tape!—Thou nothing made something by a wig!—Hag! pah!

CROWS. I shall go off in a spasm! How got she here?

MOLL. How? And don't the blushes burn your wrinkles to ask? Wasn't I carried off?—

CROWS. I—I—Come, Nelly, 'tis nearly the time that—the time—what's o'clock? (*looking doubtfully at* NELL *and* MOLLY.)

MOLL. (*taking out watch.*) Seven minutes to two, by the watch of your dear first wife.

CROWS. Watch! ring! Robbery!—Jade, I'll hang you!—I'll—(*violent knocking at door.*)

STOCK. (*without.*) Counsellor—counsellor!—There'll be murder!

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CROWS. Is Beelzebub making holiday?—What next? (NELL *opens door.*)

(*Knocking continued. Enter* STOCKFISH.)

STOCK. Flee!—flee, or ye are a dead man! The Shropshire waggon is come in!—

CROWS. Damn the Shropshire waggon!—What of that?

STOCK. And in it seven stout young men, who clamour and cry for you.

NELL. For the counsellor—for what?

STOCK. For their sister; whom, as they complain, he hath conveyed away.

CROWS. (*Aside.*) Shropshire! Can I by accident have stumbled on the truth? Why, Nelly, where are you from?

NELL. Shropshire, sir!

MOLL. I'm Shropshire too!

CROWS. (*To Nell.*) And have you any brothers?

NELL. Seven.

MOLL. Just my number.

STOCK. Savage and cruel they do look;—and they vow wrathfully against thy bones!

NELL. Just like 'em; my brothers are dragons.

MOLL. So are mine! Brother Tom once killed a butcher!

STOCK. Some of them do carry knotted cudgels as thick as my arm, and some—

CROWS. Well?

STOCK. A little thicker! If they do find ye with their sister they will slaughter ye.

NELL. (*Clinging to* CROWSFOOT.) But I'll never leave you.

MOLL. (*Clinging to him.*) No—nor I—never!

CROWS. (*Trying to shake them off.*) You shall leave me!—I don't want you!—I don't know you!—(*Knocking without.*)

HAYNES. (*Without.*) We will go up—we'll ha' his life!

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STOCK. What a shocking thing 'twill be—

CROWS. What?—

STOCK. To have a crowner's inquest in the Mitre!—(*Knocking continued—voices without.*)

VOICES. We won't be stopped—we'll ha' his life!

CROWS. Put me anywhere!—Do anything with me! My character! My bones!

NELL. The only chance, counsellor—get into the gown! (*taking gown from box.*)

CROWS. What! turn woman?

NELL. Or be cudgelled for a man.

CROWS. Give it to me!—Oh, that I were in the Temple! —(*Knocking continued—whilst* NELL *and* MOLL *hastily dress* CROWSFOOT *in gown and head-dress.*)

NELL. There—pull this well over your head.

MOLL. And be sure to walk pretty and tripping like one of us.

NELL. Here they come (STOCKFISH *whispers* NELL). A trick, indeed!

(*Enter* JOE HAYNES, *and two others disguised as peasants at door.*)

HAYNES. (*Speaking, as he enters.*) Giles, Dick and John—stay there and watch below!

ALL. Where be he,—where be he?

HAYNES. We'll beat 'un like a sheaf o' corn.

STOCK. As I'm a man of truth he whom ye seek is not here.

ALL. Where be sister?—where be sister, then?

HAYNES. (*To* NELL *and* MOLL.) You ben't she—nor—Why, no (*Seizing* CROWSFOOT), yes, spite o' all her Lunnun rags,—I do know her!—Here she be!—here, brothers, be poor lost Susan!

CROWS. (*Aside.*) Susan!

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HAYNES, &c. (*Shaking cudgels at* CROWSFOOT.) Oh, Susey—Susey!

NELL. My good people, this lady is a friend of mine;—she's not your sister.

MOLL. My own cousin!

HAYNES. (*To* CROWSFOOT.) Deny thine own flesh and blood. (*They all seize* CROWSFOOT.)

CROWS. Murder!

NELL. Mercy—you'll kill the young woman!

Enter CHARLES *and* BERKELEY.

CHAR. Shame, friends!—What, cudgel a woman?—(HAYNES *takes off* CROWSFOOT'S *head-dress.*)

CHAR. The counsellor!—let me congratulate you, learned sir.

CROWS. Congratulate!

CHAR. On your new silk gown. Never did promotion sit so gracefully.

CROWS. (*Tearing off gown.*) To be gulled—robbed—to pay for suppers!—

CHAR. Four pounds and odd—Gregory, return the amount. (BERKELEY *puts purse in* CROWSFOOT'S *hand.*)

CROWS. If I could persuade her to—Nelly—Nelly (NELL *turns away*). Tricked—exposed—(*All laugh*)—I'll wage war with all womankind—I'll confine my practice to suits against 'em, and spend the rest of my days in persecuting the frailties of the whole sex!—Oh, woman! woman! (*runs off—the party retire up.*)—(MOLL *sits at table, drinking.*)

NELL. Ha! ha! poor counsellor.—Now, to make my escape—

CHAR. What, Nelly, art running after the lawyer?

NELL. Indeed, you must not detain me.

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CHAR. Why, then, I see it;—thou'rt an antiquarian in love, and art fairly taken with the last century. In truth, now, where wouldst go?

NELL. In truth, to the theatre. You'll never guess for what? I am to speak the prologue.—Let me go, I pray!

CHAR. You shall go, and I will be at the theatre too.

NELL. Yet I'm so frightened!

CHAR. Never fear; you may see a friend there: be certain, you may; and, with such assurance,—kind-hearted, good-natured, sprightly Nelly, fare ye well.—Fortune plays a blind game, or she had taken better care of you. But, courage! I tell you, I and some friends will be at the house.

NELL. What, is't a holiday with the mercers' company?

CHAR. Nelly, if thou should'st see me, yet, seeing, miss the mercer, then—

NELL. Must I die for the loss?—What then?

CHAR. Then, own with mighty John, that—

> "Princes may retire whene'er they please,
> "And breathe free air from out their palaces;
> "They go sometimes unknown to shun their state,
> "And then 'tis manners not to know or wait."

NELL. What is all this?

CHAR. Four lines from the new play to night: mark them, and learn the wisdom they advise. And so, again, courage, Nelly, courage and success! (*Exeunt* CHARLES *and* BERKELEY.)

HAYNES. And now to return our dresses here to the wardrobe, for again I am one of the theatre.

NELL. What! you?

HAYNES. By royal mandate from the king. Let's haste; for to day their majesties in full state do honour to Mr. Dryden's new play.

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NELL. Lud a mercy! "The Conquest of Grenada?"

HAYNES. The same.

MOLL. (*Staggering forward.*) Why, bless me child! Thou'rt white as chalk!

NELL. Well I may be. I have to speak the prologue; and, before the king and queen!—My gracious!

HAYNES. What! are you the new comer the managers are mad about? You the heroine of the great hat?

NELL. I! Manager Hart would make me promise.—But I have been so teazed! I have hardly looked at the words. What shall I do?

HAYNES. Hope, and all will be well. It would be uncharitable too severely to condemn for faults, without taking some thought of the sterling goodness which mingles in and lessens them.

NELL. Say you so? Why, then, good friends, come to the theatre, and hear me, if there yet be time, rehearse the prologue. (*Exit.*)

MOLL. Joseph—Mr. Haynes—you brought me here—pray take me back again. (HAYNES *leads* MOLL *off—All exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

A Passage or Lobby of the King's Theatre.

Enter HART, *in full dress.*

HART. (*Looking at watch.*) If the girl, this Nell Gwynne should disappoint us after all!

Enter Major MOHUN.

MOHUN. My dear Hart,—the girl is come!—Though, indeed, half dead with fear for the event.

HART. We'll have her run through the verse at once. Where's Dryden?

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MOHUN. He's behind, admiring the big hat; and, with the prophetic fury of a poet, vows it will extinguish Nokes for ever. In sober truth, 'tis a beaver for Atlas.

Enter JOE. HAYNES.

HART. Mr. Haynes, you are welcome once again: yet mind, no more bells, Joe.—But time hastens; let us go and encourage the new comer.

(*Flourish of trumpets without.*)

MOHUN. Their majesties!

HART. Nay, then, we must even trust to fortune;—for there is no time for rehearsal. Away, gentlemen; away, all to your places! Come, Mohun, to light the king to his box.—(*Flourish of trumpets. Exeunt* MOHUN *with* HART *and* HAYNES. *Trumpets and music continued, when*)—

Re-enter HART *and* MOHUN *lighting Charles and the Queen, with Guards, Lords, and Ladies in waiting. Attendants, &c. &c.: they cross the stage.*

SCENE THE LAST.

Interior of King's Theatre. The Royal Box in which are their Majesties, &c. Music, "Britons strike home."

The bell is rung, the curtain opens in the middle, and enter NELL *"in a broad-brimmed hat and waist belt."*

NELL. "This jest was first of the other house's making;
"And, five times tried, has never failed of taking:
"For, 'twere a shame a poet should be killed
"Under the shelter of so broad a shield.—
"This is that hat whose very sight did win ye
"To laugh and clap as though the devil were in ye;
"As then for Nokes, so now I hope you'll be
"So dull to laugh once more for love of me.
"I'll write—

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(*Recognising* CHARLES.)
What! he—the King!—the words are flown.
(*Coming forward.*)
For Dryden's syllables, pray take my own. (*Let's hat fall.*)

First let me ask that niceness may not halt
With eager eyes, to scan out every fault;
And miss, with venal look, those streaks of light,
Which fortune only would not have more bright.
Of good and ill all character is made;
The good accept—the rest cast into shade.
Of some we'd shew (if so our hopes might draw,)
The moral amber, with nor grub nor straw;
Would take away th' unseemly gnats and flies,
And keep the prettiness that glads all eyes:
This our design; if granted, may I ask
Your hands and wishes for th' attempted task?

CURTAIN.

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An Act to amend the Laws relating to Dramatic Literary Property. [10th *June*, 1833.]

Whereas by an Act passed in the Fifty-fourth year of the Reign of his late Majesty King *George* the Third, intituled *An Act to amend the several Acts for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies and Copyright of printed Books to the Authors of such Books, or their Assigns*, it was amongst other things provided and enacted, that from and after the passing of the said Act the Author of any Book or Books composed, and not printed or published, or which should thereafter be composed and printed and published, and his Assignee or Assigns, should have the sole Liberty of printing and re-printing such Book or Books for the full Term of Twenty-eight Years, to commence from the Day of first publishing the same, and also, if the Author should be living at the End of that Period, for the Residue of his natural Life: And whereas it is expedient to extend the Provisions of the said Act; be it therefore enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That from and after the passing of this Act, the Author of any Tragedy, Comedy, Play, Opera, Farce, or any other Dramatic Piece or Entertainment, composed, and not printed and published by the Author thereof or his Assignees, or which hereafter shall be composed, and not printed or published by the Author thereof or his Assignee, or the Assignee of such Author, shall have as his own Property the sole Liberty of representing, or causing to be represented, at any Place or Places of Dramatic Entertainment whatsoever, in any Part of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, in the Isles of *Man*, *Jersey*, and *Guernsey*, or in any Part of the *British* Dominions, any such Production as aforesaid, not printed and published by the Author thereof or his Assignee, and shall be deemed and taken to be the Proprietor thereof; and that the Author of any such Production, printed and published within Ten Years before the passing of this Act by the Author thereof or his Assignee, or which shall hereafter be so printed and published, or the Assignee of such Author, shall, from the Time of passing this Act, or from the Time of such Publication respectively, until the End of Twenty-eight Years from the Day of such first Publication of the same, and also, if the Author or Authors, or the Survivor of the Authors, shall be living at the End of that Period, during the Residue of his natural Life, have as his own Property the sole Liberty of representing, or causing to be represented, the same at any such Place of Dramatic Entertainment as aforesaid, and shall be deemed and taken to be the Proprietor thereof: Provided nevertheless, that nothing in this Act contained shall prejudice, alter, or affect the Right or Authority of any Person to represent or cause to be represented, at any Place or Places of Dramatic Entertainment whatsoever, any such Production as aforesaid,

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in all Cases in which the Author thereof or his Assignee shall, previously to the passing of this Act, have given his Consent to or authorized such Representation, but that such sole Liberty of the Author or his Assignee shall be subject to such Right or Authority.

II. And be it further enacted, That if any Person shall, during the Continuance of such sole Liberty as aforesaid, contrary to the Intent of this Act, or Right of the Author or his Assignee, represent, or cause to be represented, without the Consent in Writing of the Author or other Proprietor first had and obtained, at any Place of Dramatic Entertainment within the Limits aforesaid, any such Production as aforesaid, or any Part thereof, every such Offender shall be liable for each and every such representation to the Payment of an Amount not less than Forty Shillings, or to the full Amount of the Benefit or Advantage arising from such Representation, or the Injury or Loss sustained by the Plaintiff therefrom, whichever shall be the greater Damages, to the Author or other Proprietor of such Production so represented contrary to the true Intent and Meaning of this Act, to be recovered, together with Double Costs of Suit, by such Author or other Proprietors, in any Court having Jurisdiction in such Cases in that Part of the said United Kingdom or of the *British* Dominions in which the Offence shall be committed; and in every such Proceeding where the sole Liberty of such Author or his Assignee as aforesaid shall be subject to such Right or Authority as aforesaid, it shall be sufficient for the Plaintiff to state that he has such sole Liberty, without stating the same to be subject to such Right or Authority, or otherwise mentioning the same.

III. Provided nevertheless, and be it further enacted, That all Actions or Proceedings for any Offence or Injury that shall be committed against this Act shall be brought, sued, and commenced within Twelve Calendar Months next after such Offence committed, or else the same shall be void and of no effect.

IV. And be it further enacted, That whenever Authors, Persons, Offenders, or others are spoken of in this Act in the Singular Number or in the Masculine Gender, the same shall extend to any Number of Persons and to either Sex.

BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON,
JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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THE HOUSEKEEPER;

OR,

THE WHITE ROSE.

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BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON,
JOHNSON'S COURT, FLEET STREET.

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(2

THE HOUSEKEEPER;

OR,

THE WHITE ROSE.

A COMEDY,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY

DOUGLAS JERROLD,

AUTHOR OF

"THE RENT DAY," "NELL GWYNNE," "BLACK-EYED SUSAN,"
"JOHN OVERY," &c. &c.

PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

LONDON:
JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

1833.

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"In 1772," says a history of the reign of George the First, "the partizans of the Pretender began once more to bestir themselves in his favour, in the supposition, doubtless, that the shock produced by the failure of the South Sea project, would be favourable to their designs. The measures of government, however, were so judicious and prompt, that the conspiracy was crushed in embryo. Several noblemen were arrested on suspicion: Bishop Atterbury was exiled for life; but only one person, Christopher Layer, a barrister of the Temple, suffered capital punishment. He was convicted of high treason, in enlisting men for the service of the Pretender."

Layer, it will be seen, is the only real person introduced in the following comedy; the other characters, with the incidents in which they are concerned, being the invention of the writer, who has "taken out" the allowed dramatic license, to fix on an historical circumstance as the means of developing imaginary events. In the practical working of his design, he has been most zealously seconded by *all* employed in the drama. Neither can the writer omit his cordial acknowledgments of the kindness and valuable managerial assistance of Mr. Percy Farren.

Little Chelsea, D. J.

July 19, 1833.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Sidney Maynard	Mr. Vining.
Tom Purple	Mr. Brindal.
Simon Box	Mr. Buckstone.
Father Oliver	Mr. Webster.
Daguerre	Mr. Gallot.
Benjamin	Mr. Coveney.
Laval	Mr. W. Johnstone
Christopher Layer	Mr. Bartlett.
Bin	Mr. J. Cooper.
Officer	Mr. Eaton.
Gentleman	Mr. Newcombe.

Soldiers, &c.

WOMEN.

Felicia	Miss Taylor.
Sophy Hawes	Mrs. Humby.
Widow Duckling	Mrs. Tayleure.

This Comedy was represented for the first time July 17, 1833.

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THE HOUSEKEEPER;

OR,

THE WHITE ROSE.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

An old fashioned Apartment, handsomely furnished.

Enter FELICIA *and* SOPHY HAWES.

FELICIA. I am glad, Sophy, thou hast not forgotten thy old companion.

SOPHY. Dear madam, though it's seven long years since you left us for foreign parts, there's hardly bèen a day that I hav'n't sometimes thought of you.

FEL. I have not deserved your thoughts, Sophy. I fear me, travel, with its new objects, has made me slight old friends in Derbyshire.

SOPHY. Just what my poor mother told me, madam. She used to say,—Sophy, child, where is the use in fuming and fidgetting? Thou knowest, the lady Felicia, though she was a pretty babe, and thy foster-sister, now she's a woman grown, mus'n't think of folks like us.—So, put such

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stuff from thy head, girl. But though I tried, I couldn't quite.

FEL. And thou art come to seek thy fortune in London? —I am rejoiced that my return to England,——

SOPHY. Oh! we heard about your uncle's death, and that you would soon come back.—Your poor uncle!

FEL. My last relative—my last friend, Sophy. I do but visit England to await the settlement of his will, and may after, quit it for ever.

SOPHY. Madam!

FEL. But, Sophy, what am I to think of our Derbyshire bachelors?—Was there not one with wit enough to keep you at home?

SOPHY. He didn't stay at home himself, madam.

FEL. Did he win your love, and then desert you?

SOPHY. He didn't desert me, madam.

FEL. How then?

SOPHY. We were to be married; but folks would meddle. The parson—I dare say he meant well—talked to us of early troubles, and advised us to get money first; and so, poor Simon set off to a place here in London; and—for my part, I don't see what the parson had to do with it; except to marry us, and leave the rest to ourselves.

Enter SERVANT.

SERV. The young man, below, madam, who came with—

SOPHY. That's Simon, my lady—Simon Box: he would come; he said he shouldn't rest if he didn't speak to you.—(*Exit* SERVANT.)—He would come.

Enter SIMON BOX.

SIMON. Your servant, my lady: Sophy is come up all the way from Matlock, to a place here. Now, though the foolish people in Derbyshire said 'twas a rare chance to be house-

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keeper in London, yet I—you see, my lady, you and I know what London is.

FEL. I perceive.—You wish to hear something of her mistress?

SIMON. No, my lady: I wish to hear something of her master.

FEL. Master! Do I then know the gentleman?

SIMON. Saving your presence, he hath played so many tricks in his time, 'tis said few know him long. But, as he has now foresworn the world; shut himself close in an old house in St. James's Park; given himself up to study, some say to magic—but we know, my lady, what folks will sometimes call magic;—if you think he'll keep in this staid mind—

FEL. He! Of what strange gentleman do you speak?

SIMON. Of Mr. Sidney Maynard.

SOPHY. Your ladyship's cousin.

FEL. My cousin, Sidney!

SOPHY. Dear heart! isn't your ladyship well?

FEL. I understand, now. Go on, friend.

SIMON. No, madam; I've done.—Come, Sophy.

SOPHY. But won't you hear her ladyship? Isn't Mr. Maynard a true gentleman, madam?

SIMON. Yes,—and a young gentleman. No, Sophy, 'twill never do.

FEL. I will engage for the honour—the integrity of my cousin. Yet, tell me, Sophy; what accident can have selected you for this service?

SOPHY. Why, madam, a letter came down to our curate for somebody to keep your cousin's house.—The widow Duckling was coming; when, somehow, the exciseman made up his mind of a sudden, and was to take her to church,

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the day after I came away. As I knew the secret I,—that is, Simon being in London,—no—that is—I came up instead of the widow.

SIMON. And a thoughtless child thou wert. The widow was a discreet, sober, ugly woman of five-and-forty; thou art nineteen, and, what's worse, not a scarecrow.

SOPHY. Well, Simon, every one must have a beginning. And, I'm sure, Mr. Maynard is a gentleman: doesn't madam say as much?

FEL. (*Aside.*) Never was wilder, bolder thought, and yet I'll follow it! Love, all but hopeless, will have me venture all!

SIMON. No, Sophy: doubts come thicker on me—thou sha'n't go. If her ladyship, as I am out of service, could have given thee or me, or both of us, a nook in her own family,—but to keep house for a strange young man!

FEL. I pray, for a short time, let the trial be made. You cannot doubt Sophy—should not doubt me. If, after a time—say two or three weeks—she'd quit such service, I will befriend ye both.

SIMON. Will a week do? Well, be it as your ladyship likes. I know that her mother nursed you and her;—that, for many a day, you were like little sisters together.—So, you can't but have a kind of love for the girl, and so——I'll trust you. Come, Sophy, I'll take you to the Park.

FEL. I will see her there. Yet, for further satisfaction, 'twould be well you waited on Mr. Maynard to acquaint him of Sophy's coming.

SIMON. To be sure.—(*aside*). I can then scan my gentleman: I'll look him through and through; and if I spy a flaw, she sha'n't go—no, I'll run in debt for marriage fees, and we'll starve together. (*Exit.*)

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SOPHY. I knew Mr. Maynard must be the same nice young gentleman he was, when, eight years ago, he saved your ladyship from drowning.

FEL. He is, as I hear.

SOPHY. What! ar'n't you friends?

FEL. I have seen him—and at long intervals—but twice since he saved my life; and then, as I believe, he neither saw me nor knew of my presence. A family dispute, arising from political opinions, has made us strangers. And now, child, attend to me. Sophy, I am sure thou dost love me?

SOPHY. As I love breath, madam.

FEL. Wouldst do any honest thing to serve me?

SOPHY. I'd almost lay down my life for you.

FEL. And, if I trust thee, thou wilt keep a secret?

SOPHY. As I'd keep the half of a love sixpence.

FEL. Then come with me, Sophy. I have a trial for thy love: it may be, as accidents fall out, a hard one.—Yet, be faithful, Sophy; and doubt not of a full return. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

An Apartment in Maynard's House.

Enter MAYNARD *and* PURPLE.

PURPLE. Never think it, Sidney; 'tisn't in mortal flesh of eight-and-twenty. Thou wilt grow tired of this thy hermitage, ere thou canst grace it with as much beard as an oyster.

MAYNARD. Well, time tells a tale.

PURP. What end dost thou propose to this new whim? What dost thou seek?

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MAYN. I have told thee—wisdom.

PURP. Pshaw! true wisdom's a gypsy, and pitches her tent by the highways.—Seek her in the court, the camp, the tavern, aye, the gaming-house; but stay not at home,—for, depend on't, wisdom will never knock at thy gate.

MAYN. I shall woo her to me by science,—contemplation.

PURP. Impossible; the ghosts won't let thee. Smile; the ghosts of—thy former days. I'll fancy thee here of winter nights, walled in by books—philosophers and sages in their sickly vellum. Well! thou canst not study: 'tis true, thou hast before thee a treatise writ in deep Chaldee; but, canst thou read? Do not spectres of thy past life come between thee and the book? Are not silks rustling in the air—delicate feet tripping over the boards—do not thy bookshelves change to tapestried walls—nay, doth not the very death-watch in the wainscoat quit its dull tick-tick,—and, to thy fancy, strike into a jig?

MAYN. To thine, Tom; for thy fancy would turn a mummy to a Daphne.

PURP. I thank my fancy! Thou'lt be astrologer, too?—Wilt catch colds and chilblains searching the skies?—I warrant me, Sid, thou'lt make rare discoveries in the milky way.—Thou'lt see no misshapen things; but caps, ribbons, gowns and petticoats of a distracting cut. Of all men, thou art least fit for this. Why, thou'lt never rightly see the man in the moon.

MAYN. Humph! Why not?

PURP. Because to thee he'll ever seem a woman. 'Tis plain thou'rt not in earnest; else thou'dst gone into some cave or ruin, and not have set up hermit within ear-shot of the court.

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MAYN. Have I not said, 'twas father Oliver's covenant with me, ere we quitted Paris, that we should dwell in London?

PURP. Aye; he'd fain tell the fortunes of the maids of honour, and cast the nativities of pet spaniels.

MAYN. Wilt never be serious? Father Oliver is a man profound research, most curious knowledge: are not his looks—?

PURP. Most reverend. His hair is long and sleek; his face, unruffled as a dish of cream; and, for his voice, no flute hath a softer delivery. Oh! doubtless, he is wise!

MAYN. There's not a science hidden from him.

PURP. It may be—(*Aside.*) that of picking locks included.

MAYN. He can read the heavens.

PURP. Certainly—(*Aside.*) after his own alphabet.

MAYN. Hath studied antiquities.

PURP. The most ancient—(*Aside.*) for credulity was the first-born of Adam.

MAYN. In fine, he is learned in all things; from a constellation to a plant.

PURP. The mountebank's true circle of knowledge; for they who huckster with the stars, often end their learning with hempseed.

MAYN. Well, thou wert born for idle talk, and dost but fulfil thy destiny. Talk on—I am fixed in my new purpose. I have thrown away ten good years in twenty foolish courses. I have tried all, save study, and found all vain. And now, I am almost thirty—warning thirty.

PURP. Warning thirty!

MAYN. 'Tis half the journey, Tom. Depend on't, after thirty, 'tis time to count the mile-stones.

PURP. I never was good at a reckoning—count for us both.

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Here comes sleek wisdom,—Father Oliver. Farewell; for here I am as one of the profane.

Enter FATHER OLIVER.

OLIVER. I crave your pardon, sir—I did conceive you were alone.

PURP. Nay, let me spoil no conjuration—I am gone.—(*Returning.*) Oh, Maynard, is the woman yet arrived?

OLIV. A woman!—here?

PURP. A woman—and here;—and why not?

MAYN. An old dame from the country.—Without a housekeeper the place seems dull and starved.

OLIV. Certainly: and yet Benjamin is apt, vigilant, and faithful. Have we need of other help?

PURP. Need! Live in a palace, yet without a petticoat, 'tis but a place to shiver in. Whereas, take off the house-top—break every window—make the doors creak—the chimnies smoke—give free entry to sun, wind, and rain,—still will a petticoat make the hovel habitable; nay, bring the little household gods crowding about the fire-place.

OLIV. (*To* MAYNARD.) Yet here, sir, there is nothing to to be done which Benjamin—

PURP. Benjamin! Tut! a sage is a fool to an old woman. Can Benjamin cure coughs, darn hose, make possets? Is he learned in flannel—doth he know what water-gruel is? What! dwell in this huge carcass of a house, without some comfortable woman to give it warmth and life? No—I have followed my own counsel; written to my old college friend, in Derbyshire, for a staid, plain, elderly widow; a simple-minded soul, innocent of London craft. Doubtless, she'll soon arrive;—and then—then, father Wisdom!—

OLIV. What then, sir?

PURP. Then, we'll have a housewarming shall make the

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roof quake. But, Sid, to return to the matter that brought me here. Why wilt not make one of us to-night? Nay, for one night leave this den of melancholy and come among us. We shall have rich sport.

MAYN. I have said, it is impossible. I am making certain calculations, and to-night Venus will appear—

PURP. I know she will;—then why not come and meet her? Not your Venus, twinkling coldly thousands of miles away; but a Venus, eye to eye—hand to hand; young, blooming—well, I see 'tis vain. Thou'rt for celestial graces; I'm for solid love on *terra firma:* I'd ogle for myself, thou'dst woo through a telescope; and so I leave thee for my Venus with kindling looks, to thy Venus and the rheumatism. (*Exit.*)

OLIV. Will the gentleman be frequent in his visits?

MAYN. No; finding me fixed in my design, he'll leave me to my humour. And I am fixed;—I give up all the vain purposes of life, all its follies and its feuds, for hard, unremitting study.

OLIV. At any time a wise determination.—And to a man of birth and fortune—(*Aside.*)—I'll try him now—who has so many roads to honour,—

MAYN. To what simpletons agree to call honour.

OLIV. At a time like the present, in the contest about to commence—

MAYN. Contest?—

OLIV. It may be but a rumour—yet it was whispered in Paris,—

MAYN. What was whispered?

OLIV. That king James—I mean the chevalier,—

MAYN. The Pretender as he is called?

OLIV. As he is called,—would make another venture for the English crown. This was said.

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MAYN. But what says his majesty, king George the First? Another venture?

(*Enter* BENJAMIN.)

Well, sir?

BENJAMIN. A woman is below—a woman from Derbyshire: she says to keep the house.

MAYN. Let her come up.

OLIV. I will send her to you.—(*Aside.*) No, we cannot count on him. Well, as he will not work with us, he shall, spite of himself, work for us.—(*Exit.*)

BEN. I kept father Oliver's house in Paris: he said I was to keep your house here. I don't understand—

MAYN. If you'd quit your place, the doors are open. If you'd still keep it, learn better manners. Send the woman to me.

BEN. (*Aside.*) She'll spoil all, now: and yet, if she's curious, she'd better staid in Derbyshire than come near Benjamin. (*Exit.*)

MAYN. (*Sits.*) Yes, I am sure I have done wisely. In good time have I turned from the dissipation and frivolity of life, to seek in true wisdom—

Re-enter BENJAMIN.

BEN. Here's the woman.

MAYN. Very well. (BENJAMIN *shews on* FELICIA, *drest as a country-girl.* BENJAMIN *goes off.*)—In true wisdom, the only lasting good. All else is hollow. Glory! 'tis but a bubble blown from blood. Law! a spider's wisdom: and politics! the stateman ponders and plans, winning nothing certain but ingratitude and the indigestion. Whilst for woman! we hunt a wild-fire and vow it is a star. I have done with these vanities. Woman!—I' faith I had forgotten my housekeeper. Now, for a face with a decent sprinkling

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of wrinkles—a skin of parchment, wherein time hath left a memorandum of comeliness—a few silver hairs—a quiet, grandmotherly eye—four teeth at the most, and a back like a bow. Such should be the handmaid of a philosopher, and such—(*Rising and seeing* FELICIA)—My dear,—my—why, young, pretty and—are you from the skies?

FEL. No, sir; Derbyshire.

MAYN. This is some mistake. Are you sure I am the person? To whom were you sent?

FEL. To a steady, respectable, studious gentleman. Perhaps, I've been misdirected?

MAYN. Oh! you must have come to the wrong house.

FEL. Do you think so, sir?

MAYN. That is, possibly there may be another steady gentleman in the neighbourhood; but I doubt whether he is—

FEL. (*Shewing card.*) "Mr. Sidney Maynard, Birdcage Walk, St. James's Park?"

MAYN. My name and address, certainly, but—(*Aside.*)—she's very pretty!

FEL. I thought I was right, sir.

MAYN. Yes, child, but—(*Aside.*) pretty!—she's beautiful. But tell me, if—if—(*Aside*) I feel I'm becoming a philosopher, for a blooming wench makes a fool of me. Tell me; how long have you lost your husband?

FEL. Lost! I've not begun to lose, yet.

MAYN. Not begun to lose?

FEL. I never had the care of one.

MAYN. The person named to me was in her widowhood.

FEL. Yes, sir; but she has since grown out of it.

MAYN. Why, child, do you talk riddles? What has happened to the woman?

FEL. A second husband, sir.

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MAYN. If so, I must make the best of my disappointment.

FEL. I'm sure, sir, it sha'n't be my fault if anything's amiss.

MAYN. Your fault? You say the widow is married; well, what do you wish?

FEL. To take her place, sir.

MAYN. What! be my housekeeper? Live in this place—in such a house?

FEL. It's a very nice house, sir; and when put a bit to rights—

MAYN. But, my dear girl, your reputation—you don't know the dangers, the deceits of London?

FEL. Oh, don't I?—I've had a lesson I shall never forget.

MAYN. Already?

FEL. See here, sir—(*Shewing a ring on her finger.*)

MAYN. Well, I see—a ring.

FEL. 'Twas picked up in the street only an hour ago by, as I thought, a good old soul, who offered me her share in it—for she said it was part mine—for half the money in my pocket.

MAYN. A good beginning. Why, thou hast spent half thy fortune on pieces of red and white glass.

FEL. But then I have bought wisdom will serve me in all hazards.

MAYN. What, in the ring?

FEL. Yes: for when gentlemen say fine things to me—call my lips rubies, and my eyes diamonds, I shall turn from them and look here at my bits of glass.

MAYN. Very well. But some may talk of marriage?

FEL. Still I shall think of the cheat to-day, and consider if old women are the only ring-droppers.

MAYN. Thou hast a pretty way of turning loss to profit. What's thy name, child?

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FEL. Sophia Hawes.

MAYN. Sophia?

FEL. Friends and acquaintance call me Sophy.

MAYN. Sophy? (*Aside.*) This is the oddest adventure—but, no, 'twill never do. A student with a Hebe for a housekeeper;—and why not? 'Tis rashness to seek temptation—yet cowardice to fly from it. Besides, there is so much singularity in the affair, and the girl is so innocent, and so—so pretty—that, until she is settled, I ought, I must, give her house-room. But, Sophia—no, that will never do,—thou must let me call thee Sophy, too?

FEL. And welcome, sir.

MAYN. Tell me, Sophy; do they know in Derbyshire to what place thou art come?

FEL. Nobody, but the widow; and she promised to keep the secret till she was fairly married. I stole away directly, for I did so want to see London!

MAYN. Well, Sophy, for a season at least thou mayest remain. And now, child, (*taking her hand*) attend to me. You must be very diligent.

FEL. I'll never be quiet, sir.

MAYN. Yet, go about without any stir or noise.

FEL. If ever you chance to hear me, you won't know me from a mouse.

MAYN. Never shew any ill temper.

FEL. La, sir! what *is* ill temper?

MAYN. Never come near me in my studies.

FEL. For the live-long day I won't even think of you.

MAYN. Never talk.

FEL. I hate talking.

MAYN. Never—no, I think that winds up the list. These

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preliminaries settled, (*still holds her hand.*) give me your hand on——

FEL. *Which* hand, sir?

MAYN. Which? why, both hands. And now, Sophy—

(*Enter* BENJAMIN.)

What do you want?

BEN. There's a man below, come about the bricks from Babylon.

MAYN. I'll come; I'll—Benjamin; henceforth, attend to this person in all things. (*Aside.*) Bricks from Babylon! Faith, just now I am more puzzled by hierographs from Derbyshire. (*Exit.*)

FEL. Benjamin.

BEN. Well?

FEL. Your keys, Benjamin.

BEN. Humph! You are to be my mistress, I suppose?

FEL. Yes, Benjamin: and seeing, Benjamin, that I am entrusted with so rare a jewel, Benjamin, I would fain keep it under lock and key, Benjamin.

BEN. There they are (*giving them. Aside.*) at least, a few of them. Be sure and don't lose any of us. (*Exit.*)

FEL. To what has my fortune—an impulse which I have felt it vain to combat—reduced me? He is generous, kind, good; every look, every word declares it. And yet I wish I had not come—wish—alas! I dare not speak my wish, no not to my own heart, though 'tis well nigh breaking with it. (*Exit.*)

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SCENE III.

St. James's Park. View of MAYNARD'S *House, Bird-cage Walk. Enter* SIMON BOX.

SIMON. (*Looking at the house.*) No; I'll not take the trouble to knock—I am satisfied; it's not an honest, straightforward-looking house. There's a grimness about the walls, and the windows don't stare fairly out, but have a leering, squinting look. The very chimnies only seem to stand there for a trick. Sophy sha'n't live there; and I'll back and say so. Stay now; if, to be sure, I could see any of Mr. Maynard's tradesmen; if I could get his character from the butcher or the baker: a good word from his tailor would be better than all.

OLIVER *is seen to come from* MAYNARD'S *house.*

OLIV. It is full time. Layer promised to come or send.

SIMON. Pray, sir, without offence, what do you think of that house?

OLIV. That house! (*Aside.*) Is this a messenger? Why, friend?

SIMON. Nay, sir, I wait for you. A little curious business that—what *do* you think of that house?

OLIV. (*Aside.*) He seems a simple fool; I may, with little risk, venture the pass-words. I think—(*approaching* SIMON; *with significance*)—"The white rose is a pretty flower."

SIMON. No question; though some folks have a better liking for the red.

OLIV. Just so.

SIMON. But, sir, don't let us part on colours. (*Exit* OLIVER.) Now, is that a mad gardener or is it—Eh? another.

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(*Enter* DAGUERRE.)

Pray, sir, what do you think of that house?

DAG. That house? (*Aside.*) A new recruit, perhaps.—What, that house with the white roses in the window?

SIMON. White roses? There's nothing but the curtains, and they seem—

DAG. Very true. (*Exit.*)

SIMON. Surely, they are curtains.

(*Enter* LAVAL.)

Kind sir, may a poor man ask your opinion? What do you think of that house?

LAVAL. That with the weathercock?

SIMON. With the weathercock.

LAV. Of the shape and colour of a—a white rose?

SIMON. No: of the shape and colour of a red fox.

LAV. Very right—a red fox. (*Exit.*)

SIMON. I see; there's some wager a-foot about white roses. To the next I'll speak roses too. (*Looking off.*) Why, there they are, talking to that silky looking old gentleman. And there, another joins them. Now, the two leave, and the old man and the stranger—their heads close together—come this way. I'll hang back a little. (*Retires.*)

Enter OLIVER *and* CHRISTOPHER LAYER.

LAYER. This is the golden time. To-night we must decide.

OLIV. Art sure we are yet strong enough?

LAY. We shall gain no strength by longer delay. All is ripe in Scotland,—my lads on the Essex coast wait but the word to rise, and now or never is the time. At what hour shall we come?

OLIV. Ten.

LAY. The signal?

OLIV. After I have lighted the lamp in the second window, I will be at the door, and admit all friends.

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LAY. The old pass-words, "the white rose is a pretty flower?" Is not your student to be won to us?

OLIV. Let him alone. We must be content with cheating him.

LAY. A cheat indeed! If he knew the scholar Oliver were the agent of king James—if he knew that you had made his house the rendezvous of rebels!

OLIV. The jest lies only in success. Go, and see our friends are punctual.

LAY. Never doubt them. The lamp at the second window—the hour ten—and the pass-words—

OLIV. (*Seeing* SIMON *come down.*) Hush! (*Exit* LAYER.)

SIMON. Kind sir, the house you were pointing at—the house, that like a white rose on its slender stalk—

OLIV. What of the house?

SIMON. I would fain know its reputation: for I suspect—

OLIV. You do?

SIMON. In fact, I am certain that in that house—

OLIV. Well?

SIMON. A conspiracy is hatching against—

OLIV. Silence.

SIMON. I won't!—A conspiracy against—

OLIV. (*Alarmed.*) Speak not so loud.—Against whom?

SIMON. Against Sophy Hawes!—I know it. A pretty place for a young housekeeper!

OLIV. Oh!—the housekeeper? You know the young woman? Her friend, perhaps?

SIMON. I've got beyond friendship a long time!

OLIV. (*Aside.*) So!—he may rid us of her. To be plain with you, I have heard stories of that house that—but few words will suffice: take the victim away.

SIMON. I thought so.

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OLIV. You cannot conceive the riots—the iniquities acted in that house.

SIMON. The villainy shews through the walls. There's a conscience in brick and mortar.

OLIV. Defer not a moment—take the hapless creature away. (*Exit.*)

SIMON. If wisdom hadn't kept the hapless creature away! I wonder what he and his friend were talking of. For once, I wished for long ears—for not a word came to me. As for Sophy, let me see—

Enter SOPHY.

SOPHY. This is so whimsical, I can't help creeping about, looking at the house. How my lady will manage when—(*seeing* SIMON.)—Simon?

SIMON. Sophy; why, what dost here alone?

SOPHY. Alone? I—(*Aside*)—La! I wish I might tell him. Why, I've just stepped out for—for an errand for my master.

SIMON. Master!

SOPHY. Yes: we didn't wait for your coming back; it's all over—I'm settled.

SIMON. You are?

SOPHY. What does the man gape and stare at? I'm settled, I tell you; and there's our house.

SIMON. You don't call that a house?

SOPHY. What does it look like?

SIMON. As I stand here, it looks a great monster; all the windows seem large goggling eyes; the door yawns into a dark, deep mouth, and shows a long throat with, all the way down, fifteen ridges of double teeth!

SOPHY. Simon, you've taken to drinking! I never saw a prettier house; I don't see—

SIMON. I know it—poor soul! Do you see (*pointing off.*)

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that swan in the water? It doesn't seem to move a joint,—but, white and without a spot, floats at its own accord?

SOPHY. Pretty creature! and so it does.

SIMON. I doubt not that house, like many more in this town, is a swan house.

SOPHY. A swan house?

SIMON. All white and fair outside, as far as you can see; but then, only think of the black legs that's working out of sight! I have heard such tales of that den!

SOPHY. Tales, Simon!

SIMON. Sixteen young housekeepers since Christmas are a few.

SOPHY. Sixteen! And all had warning?

SIMON. Warning! Five were driven to poison; three are in a madhouse; two made a rash use of their garters; and that piece of water has been dragged for the bodies of the other six; but—

SOPHY. But what, Simon?

SIMON. Not one has ever come to hand.

SOPHY. (*Aside.*) My dear young lady! But is it all true, Simon?

SIMON. I heard the whole story just now from a weeping gentleman in black—in black; one of the relations, no doubt.

SOPHY. What! here?

SIMON. Here: you may tell by the tears where he stood.

SOPHY. What shall I do, Simon?

SIMON. Drop down upon your two knees, clasp both your hands, and pray that all delights and blessings may fall, thick as hailstones, on my head.

SOPHY. On your head?

SIMON. Your preserver's head! But come with me to the Lady Felicia's.

SOPHY. I—I—(*Aside.*) Oh, that I might tell him! Yet I

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mus'n't seem afraid, else he'll never leave me. Don't I tell you that I'm come out on an errand for my master?

SIMON. An errand, for what?—speak—for what?

SOPHY. For—for—(*Aside.*) What shall I say?—For worsted.

SIMON. Worsted!

SOPHY. Yes; red worsted.

SIMON. Red worsted! Perhaps, blood-red! There's a hint of murder in the colour.

SOPHY. Simon, I don't believe any of these tales; I—there's nothing in the house that—

SIMON. If ghosts are nothing: four female ghosts—two of them with brown hair, sisters—in hoops, and playing on the harpsichord, go through every room at midnight.

SOPHY. Why, where do they come from?

SIMON. From the wine-cellar; for, on digging there eight months ago, last Tuesday, there were found four skeletons, drest in white satin, to match.

SOPHY. (*Aside.*) My poor lady! I—I don't believe a word of it!—(They'll kill her!)—I tell you, Simon, hold your tongue! You only talk to frighten me—(My sweet lady!)—Don't speak; don't come near me!—(I'll die for her!)—Let me go about my business.

SIMON. Not a foot, Sophy—not a foot without me.

Enter PURPLE.

PURP. How now, sirrah? Let the girl pass. Do you know this person, my pretty maid?

SOPHY. Never saw his face before, sir!

SIMON. What?

SOPHY. And he will plague me so; pray sir, keep him from me, sir! Thank ye sir.—(*Aside.*)—And now, to lose Simon, and then get to my dear lady!—(*runs off.*)

SIMON. Sophy! Sophy! Do you know what you've done, sir?

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PURP. Tut! let the wench go home.

SIMON. (*Aside*) This gay bird may know something of that cave. I'll swallow my anger, and—Pray, sir, do you know that house?

PURP. Very well. Why?

SIMON. The new housekeeper, who—

PURP. What! Is the woman come?

SIMON. She *is* come. Did you expect her?

PURP. We have looked for her some days.

SIMON. (*Aside*) We! I'm right—he's one of the gang!

PURP. You know the woman, then?

SIMON. I think I do.

PURP. And is she a nice, comfortable creature?

SIMON. She was this morning.

PURP. Ha! ha! an excellent thought! If the lads warm quickly over the bottle, I'll bring them all away to Maynard's; and, spite of him, make a night of it! The housekeeper is really come, eh? Then we'll give full employment to her, you may depend upon it! (*Exit.*)

SIMON. I wonder the sparks don't come out of my mouth; for, from my fingers to my toes, I glow like a blacksmith's forge. What's to be done? I've tried poison, drowning, ghosts and all, yet with no help. I have it—I'll go back to the lady Felicia; make her send for Sophy, marry her, and there an end. (*Looking at house.*) A pretty dwelling for a housekeeper! I know not rightly who could take the place, unless the devil had a sister out of service. (*Exit.*)

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SCENE IV.

MAYNARD'S *Study.—The room furnished with book-shelves, globes, maps, antiques, statues, &c.—A large telescope, with other astronomical and scientific instruments.*

FELICIA *discovered, arranging books and papers.*

FEL. Here I am, installed in office! Already I have raised my philosopher's curiosity. If I can, by a mixture of simplicity and address, thicken the mystery—if I can but continue to excite his interest, until, quite bewildered, he begs the goddess to walk from forth the cloud, and—and, alas! what then? If I have failed to touch his heart, will he not misconstrue my boldness? I—I almost wish I was safe at home again. Ah me! here he comes!

Enter MAYNARD.

MAYN. Sophy! (*Aside.*) What eyes this girl has! This is very wrong. I told you never to enter my study. No petticoat must violate the sanctity of this retreat.

FEL. I was only putting the things to rights.

MAYN. Sophy, receive this as a solemn charge: never attempt to put anything to rights in this room—I prefer confusion.

FEL. But, sir, only look at the cobwebs and spiders.

MAYN. I'm partial to cobwebs—I encourage spiders.

FEL. But, then, the mice—they gallop about like little ponies. Why don't you keep a cat, sir?

MAYN. A cat! No, even in little things, I hope I am a philanthropist.

FEL. Oh! You prefer a trap? Yet, if learning were wisdom, your mice should be too wise to be caught.

MAYN. Too wise! How?

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FEL. Because 'twould seem, by some of your volumes, that the mice devoured as many books as their master. (*Showing book, with its leaves half-destroyed.*)

MAYN. (*Taking book.*) Alack, poor Homer! If Pythagoras' creed were true, and every mouse were an annotator, they couldn't have used the Iliad more unmercifully. Yes, Sophy, we must do for Homer what Homer couldn't afford for himself—keep a cat. Now, go, child; I am very busy.

FEL. I won't say a word, sir.

MAYN. A word? How can I study with you here? I am going to observe a planet that—

FEL. What planet? I do so love the stars!

MAYN. Why, what can you know about the stars?

FEL. Oh! there were a great many gypsies in our parts. What planet, sir?

MAYN. Why—why Venus, so you must leave me.

FEL. La! sir, why can't you observe Venus with me in the room?

MAYN. (*Aside.*) What a whimsical creature it is! Sophy, —I—I wish thou wert old and ugly.

FEL. That's what our girls in Derbyshire used to wish;—but, bless you, it did no good. Why can't you study whilst I—(*Taking hold of one of Maynard's ruffles*).—Look at this beautiful lace, all in holes! I tell you what—(*Taking off his ruffle.*) whilst you look at the stars, I'll sit here and darn this ruffle. (*Takes housewife from pocket; sits down, and begins to work.*)

MAYN. (*Aside.*) Now, spite of me I can't be angry. What delicate, soft fingers she has! (*Tearing his other ruffle.*) A few stitches have dropped in this. (*Holding out his wrist, Felicia takes off the ruffle.*) Yes, she may stay—

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she'll not break on my abstractions. (*Looking among papers.*) Aye, here are my calculations. (*Sits.*) Here is the work of many a severe hour. Copernicus maintained ——

FEL. (*At work.*) The most lovely lace, to be sure!

MAYN. Maintained this chimera,—but Tyco Brahe—

FEL. (*At work.*) Was never bought for a guinea a-yard.

MAYN. Now, Sophy, if you talk—

FEL. Talk!—I was only thinking aloud, sir.

MAYN. Destroyed this hypothesis.

FEL. (*Still working.*) Ha! there goes another thread.

MAYN. Now, Sophy! (*rising.*) But the night is coming on, I must to my work—(*going to telescope.*) I'll just sweep the heavens. Ha! there's Saturn, and to night how sharply the rings are defined. (MAYNARD *continues to look through the telescope.*)

FEL. (*Working, sings in a drawling tone.*)

In one of our Derbyshire springs,
Which petrify bird, fruit and tree,
An old fairy goldsmith sold rings,
To people who wedded would be.
Alack! well-a-day, even Cupid's light wing
May flit near the brink, but beware of the spring.

MAYN. Sophy, this is insupportable! I cannot suffer this noise.

FEL. Noise, sir! why, it's called music in Derbyshire.

MANY. Then, like many travellers, it has changed its name on the road. If you breathe another syllable,—

FEL. I won't think one. I'm sure I thought to amuse you, but if—

MAYN. Will you close that pretty mouth?—Now, not a word—not even a sigh—(*again looks through the telescope.*) I never before beheld the rings so luminous.

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FEL. *(sings in her natural voice.)*

" We asked," cry the married, " for gold,
" To make flesh of flesh, bone of bone;
" But, fairy, the ring thou hast sold,
" Hath made of our hearts stone of stone."
Alack !—well-a-day, even Cupid's light wing,
May turn into flint if it dip in the spring.

MAYN. Sophy! In a word, you must leave me. I shall never get to my task.

FEL. What! hav'n't you done? I thought you'd been looking at Venus all this time; Venus and her wedding-rings? *(rising.)* Pray, then, let me spy at the lady: one little peep, and I won't teaze you a minute longer. How bright the star is!—but, (*looking through glass,*) good heart! now it seems all over spots.

MAYN. Those spots are only to be seen through an excellent glass.

FEL. Dear me! sir, then how foolish it is in you to look at 'em.

MAYN. Why, child, 'tis that folly which makes our wisdom.

FEL. 'Tis that makes the wisdom of the very wise, old, spectacled bachelor, who spends all his life discovering flaws and blots, whilst another woos and weds, and, looking only with his natural eye, sees to the end of his days, nothing but light.

MAYN. Sophy! these words are—

FEL. My grandmother's; she'd a mortal aversion to old bachelors. Oh! there's the moon! Tell me; is it true, that love is made in the moon?

MAYN. The moon is said to be inhabited, but—

FEL. Well, I meant the same thing. And is it true, that the people have faces like melons, bodies like grasshoppers, and voices like French horns?

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MAYN. I have made no such discovery. Thou'dst better judge for thyself. *(Leads her to telescope.)* Now, what dost thou see?

FEL. (*Looking through telescope.*) Mountains of diamonds —towns of gold—churches of crystal, and—oh! dear, there's a wedding! I can hear the bells and see the white favours.

MAYN. Thy uppermost wishes may imagine them; but, truly, now, what dost thou see?

FEL. Truly,—*(Coming from the glass.)* now I see the moon bright, clear and beautiful, a world of light; and now, *(looking through glass)* by the help of this most excellent glass, it looks like—

MAYN. What?

FEL. A bowl of curds and whey;—a fine figure of all thy future experience.—For, pent up here alone, souring thyself in this dungeon, thou'lt think thou'rt discovering wondrous territories, unheard-of wealth; when, at the last, an old, wrinkled, solitary, techy bachelor, thou'lt look with the eyes of truth, and all thy wisdom will appear—mere curds and whey!

MAYN. Nay, Sophy; this is no housekeeper's speech—there is a mystery in your words, actions, looks—(*following her.*)

FEL. *(Avoiding him, and taking book from shelf.)* What! do you read Tasso?

(*Chants.*) Intanto Erminia fra l'ombrose piante
D'antica selva, dal cavallo è scorta,
Nè più governa il fren la man tremante,
E mezza quasi par tra viva e morta.

Isn't it beautiful Welch?

MAYN. Welch?

FEL. Our curate—he'd been a great traveller—taught it me for Welch!—But the stars, sir—the stars!

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MAYN. Thou hast too much perplexed me for the stars. We must—

FEL. (*Avoiding him, and placing chess-table between them.*) What! Do you play at chess?

MAYN. Sometimes,—but—now—

FEL. An excellent thing to discipline the mind—I play a little. (*Arranging the pieces.*)

MAYN. Nay, my fair housekeeper, no evasion shall serve you. I must know your mystery.

FEL. (*Aside.*) I have gone too far. How to escape?

MAYN. (*Holding* FELICIA, *who struggles to get away.*) Come, confess, who and what you really are: confess,—I must have—

(*Enter* FATHER OLIVER, *with a lighted lamp.*)

FEL. (*Disengaging herself.*) A light—very true, sir.—I (*getting towards the door and securing the key.*)—I have placed the pieces, sir—father Oliver is come, and—good night, sir.—(*Exit: she is heard to lock the door.*)

MAYN. Stay!—She locks the door!

OLIV. (*Rushing to door.*)—Locked! (*Aside.*) And in an instant they will be here! Destruction!—(OLIVER *and* MAYNARD *look confusedly at each other, and the scene closes.*)

END OF ACT I.

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ACT II.—SCENE I.

A spacious Hall in the House of Maynard.

Enter FELICIA.

FELICIA. I have locked the door, and thus secured my retreat. I have been too precipitate: escape and secresy are all I can now look for: so ends my hopeful comedy! Now, a perpetual bridle be upon my tongue, for its silly ambling! I—no, it is in vain to ponder,—home! home!—(*Approaching door: a knock.*) Can this be Benjamin? He may question—(*Another knock.*) yet I know no other outlet.—(*Opens door*—SOPHY *runs in.*) Sophy!

SOPHY. My dear lady, I can't help it!—scold me, never speak to me, never think of me,—I can't help it!—I couldn't stop away, I—

FEL. At such an hour, Sophy?

SOPHY. I couldn't get rid of that Simon; he watched me, and—(*Alarmed.*) Hark! don't you hear something knocking?

FEL. (*Aside.*) My prisoners above. 'Tis nothing. (*Aside.*) Yes, I may depend on her fidelity. She shall remain—'twill help the mystery.

SOPHY. (*Becoming more terrified.*) There, lady! I'm sure I heard the rustling of satin—white satin!

FEL. Sophy, be not a child; attend to me. I purpose leaving this house immediately.

SOPHY. I thank goodness you do!

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FEL. Yet, to perfect my plan, 'tis necessary that you take my place.

SOPHY. I!

FEL. And more; the better to perplex Mr. Maynard, spite of all he may advance, declare that you, and you only, have been here all the time. I have locked him in his study; when I am safe away—why, Sophy, what makes you tremble and look so pale?

SOPHY. I never could bring my mind to ghosts; and though to serve you, I—I—

FEL. What has possessed you? Ghosts!

SOPHY. You don't know what a service this is. Six-and-twenty housekeepers since Michaelmas!

FEL. Sophy?

SOPHY. Sixteen took arsenic—seven went raving mad—five killed themselves like the farmer's daughter in the song,—and, for the remainder, they're to this day unaccounted for!

FEL. What idle gossip have you listened to?

SOPHY. Don't say idle, ma'am; it all came through a person in black, with weepers,—one of the brothers! I ran here to tell you,—for if the spirits—

FEL. Spirits!

SOPHY. Eight ghosts—four of 'em twin sisters, with flaxen hair down to their heels—all at midnight, go through the house,—some playing at hoop and some the harpsichord. (*A knock—Sophy shrieks, and falls on her knees, holding Felicia.*) Ha!

FEL. Silence! (*A knock.*)

SOPHY. There!

FEL. Be not so weak—so foolish. At this hour, who can it be? (*Approaching door.*)

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SOPHY. (*Endeavouring to prevent her.*) Dear lady! you'll never—

(*A third knock, and* VOICE *without.*)

"The white rose is a pretty flower!"

SOPHY. So it is, but how droll to say so through a key-hole!

FEL. "The white rose"—"the white!"—Sophy, you have heard stories of this house!

SOPHY. It's no house—it's a large brick coffin. I'm sure, the very curtains look like winding-sheets. Stories!

FEL. "The white rose!" That man, Father Oliver,—there's craft in his looks—mystery in his words;—from France, too!—I'll see this visitor, and then decide.

SOPHY. You'll never open the door? We're poor women,—alone—with nothing but our screams!

FEL. Be calm—be silent! Our lives, perhaps the lives of others, depend on your composure. If there be danger, I will protect you at my own suffering: but dear, good Sophy, by your love for me, be still!

SOPHY. As a stone. We were born at the same time, and why shouldn't we die at the same time? They may cut me to bits, I won't so much as squeak—won't say a word. Poor Simon! (*A knock.*)

FEL. Observe, and follow me in all things.

(*A knock.*—VOICE *without:*—"The white rose")—

FELICIA *opens the door, when suddenly enter* LAVAL, DAGUERRE, *and others of the party.*

LAV. *and* DAG. Women!

FEL. (*Aside.*) So many! If you please, good gentlemen, who do you want?

LAV. Humph! You heard us knock often—heard us speak?

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FEL. Not a word.—Did you knock more than once?—We ask pardon, but, sitting by the fire, we fell fast—fast asleep. (*Yawning:* SOPHY *imitates her throughout the scene.*)

DAG. Faith! such pretty chimney-figures might shorten a winter's night. Why, thou'rt not yet well awake; even now, there's time to win some gloves.

FEL. (*Repulses him*) Hands—not gloves.

LAV. This must not be.—(*Aside to* DAGUERRE.) Is this a time?—(*To* FELICIA.) Father Oliver, can he not be seen?

FEL. He's busy—busy at, I think they call it, chess, with Mr. Maynard.

DAG. And Benjamin?

FEL. He is out.

DAG. Out?

FEL. Sent somewhere on an errand by the father.

SOPHY. Yes—on an errand.

FEL. Shall I tell father Oliver all you gentlemen are here?

LAV. Stay. You've pretty faces for a riband;—here is a crown each. Now, (*to* FELICIA) if unobserved by your master, you could hint to the father that some friends were waiting—

FEL. Then master mus'n't know it?

LAV. Why, now, I warrant me, you yourselves have sometimes a friend at the fireside you wouldn't have your master told of?

FEL. Yes—often.

SOPHY. Every Sunday.

LAV. 'Tis even so with father Oliver.—You understand?

FEL. Oh, yes—(*Aside*) Doubt becomes certainty. I will at every hazard, stay and watch them.—Dear heart, gentle-

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men, if the father had but trusted me—had but told me you were coming to supper,—

LAV. As for supper—

FEL. I don't believe we've a drop of wine in the house.—(*To* SOPHY) Child, run down to the cellar, and—

SOPHY. (*Alarmed—aside to* FELICIA.)—The cellar! Why, that cellar—

FEL. (*Aside to* SOPHY.) Hush! I'll see to it myself.

LAV. By no means,—we will not trouble you.

SOPHY. And I know there's not a drop.—Now I remember, I dare say, Mr. Oliver has sent out Benjamin for wine and supper too.—I shouldn't—(*A knock*—SOPHY *screams*) Mercy on us!

FEL. (*To* SOPHY) Art out of thy wits?—More of the company, I dare say—(*Going to door.*)

LAV. Stay; should it be any of your master's friends,—if we are seen,—

FEL. His friends! He sees nobody—hasn't a friend in the world.—(*They all retire, as* FELICIA *opens the door.*)

(*Enter* BIN, *carrying a hamper of wine.*)

Bless me—what is all this?

BIN. (*Slightly intoxicated.*) Wine, red lips; wine! If there's a corkscrew at hand, I'll tell you the quality.

FEL. But who sent it here?

BIN. A gentleman.

FEL. Art sure?

BIN. Who but a gentleman could do such things?

SOPHY. But when—and how—and who?—

BIN. My little love, my profession is the profession of a pack-horse—not to ask, or to answer, but to carry. Read the direction.—(*Offering card.*)—Am I right?

FEL. (*Preventing* SOPHY—*and returning card.*) It's enough

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to make a body blush, sir;—but we—we wer'n't taught to read.

BIN. No! I should have thought four such eyes could do any thing without teaching.—Well, some have beauty, some have learning. I won't brag of my beauty,—but—but—I'll read the direction. (*Reads*) "Mr. Maynard, Bird-cage"—(*looking at* FELICIA *and* SOPHY) very pretty birds—"Walk, St. James's Park." Am I right?

FEL. Quite right; and sent here by a gentleman?

BIN. Though I didn't see him, every bottle cries, "a gentleman."—You hav'n't a corkscrew?

FEL. Not such a thing in the house.—There, good night.

BIN. Good night.—(*Pauses—comes down between them.*) Yet, I have a serious word to say to you.

FEL. *and* SOPHY. To us!

BIN. Something about your future peace of mind.

FEL. Well?—(*Both* FELICIA *and* SOPHY *listen anxiously.* DAGUERRE *and* LAVAL *are seen listening at back.*)

BIN. You are young, very pretty, and may get husbands. Now—are you attending?

BOTH. Yes—yes.

BIN. It's worth attention; for it's something come to my mind from the dreadful state of this house. If you would have your husbands—for I know what men are,—if you would have your husbands love, worship, honour and respect you,—never, never—

BOTH. Never?—

BIN. Never be without a corkscrew!

SOPHY. Is that all?

BIN. Don't shun good advice. I feel I speak as a father; for if I'd twenty marrying daughters, these should be my solemn words to each—"Never be without a corkscrew!"

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(FELICIA *sees* BIN *out at door.*—LAVAL, DAGUERRE, &c. *shen themselves,*)

FEL. You see, gentlemen, father Oliver has not forgotten you. Benjamin—

LAV. But may not this be sent to your master? May he not expect friends?

FEL. Wine for master—wine for fishes; they'd as soon drink it. And for friends, they're all upon his bookshelves. No: this is all Benjamin's doing, and like him; he's so sly and close, he won't trust any body; else I'd have had all things to rights. But come, Sophy!

LAV. How long have you been servant here?

FEL. Housekeeper, sir.—Not long; this (*pointing to* SOPHY) is my cousin: the place is so dull she came to sit with me. But we won't talk now. Sophy, here, take the wine into that room.—(*Giving her two of the bottles—Aside to her.*)—Be prudent—be calm! That room—the gentlemen will follow you.

LAV. In, gentlemen.

SOPHY. (*Endeavouring to conceal her terror.*)—This way, if you please.—(*Two of the party take up the hamper.*)—Thank ye, gentlemen; this—(*Aside*)—I can't speak—I feel as if I'd a wet feather drawn about my throat;—this way, sirs;—(*to* FELICIA)—you'll come directly, cousin? Gentlemen,—this—dear Simon!—(*She goes off, curtseying, and surrounded by conspirators.*)

LAV. Now, my pretty maid—father Oliver.

FEL. I'll run directly.

LAV. Caution.

FEL. Bless you, I know how to cheat master.—(*Going—comes back.*) I say, if when he is sound asleep, we could have a little dance?

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LAV. It may be—but quick.

FEL. You promise then?—I'll go.—(*Aside.*) I see it all; conspiracy—treason! At any venture he must be saved. Now, mind, 'tis a bargain between us?—A dance—when he's asleep, you know, a little dance? (*Exit.*)

DAG. Must we decide? Is this our last meeting?

LAV. The last: Layer has his men ready—all our friends are staunch; father Oliver has received King James's declaration of right to the English crown; he is to-night to read it to us, and furnish copies for secret circulation.

DAG. I could have liked some other place of rendezvous. Is not this house too near the court?

LAV. In that lies our safety. In matters such as ours the boldest conduct is the surest. Whilst they look abroad for treason, we securely spring the mine beneath their feet. Come. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

Maynard's Study.—MAYNARD *and* OLIVER *discovered, playing at chess.*

OLIV. (*With suppressed anxiety—listening.*) There!—surely it is her foot on the staircase!

MAYN. I was wont to have a nice ear for such music—yet I distinguish nothing. Tut! why should we listen? The move, father—the move! Have a care; or, pupil as I am, you'll lose. Come! when it is her good pleasure to unlock the door, the door will be unlocked. Why, father, I shall fain think thou hast missed some delicate appointment.

OLIV. Sir!

MAYN. Thou dost take this girlish frolic so gravely.

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Have we not sat whole nights at the game; and now, half an hour wearies you?

OLIV. I am moved that a servant should presume—

MAYN. Poor thing! 'tis her simplicity.—(*Aside.*)—I would she'd come! All my senses are in a whirl! Her eye has such inborn intelligence—her voice, so expressive in its sweet depth—her hands—her step!—nothing is vulgar, yet nothing artificial. Who can she be? Well,—time, time! Now, father.

OLIV. You play well, sir—very well.—(*Playing.*)

MAYN. Not so. (*Playing.*) You are too easy with me.

OLIV. No, indeed; you now send me to my studies. (*Aside.*) I can scarce master myself! At so nice a moment,—if they come—and the girl,—(*Catches the eye of* MAYNARD, *and returns to the play.*)

MAYN. Nay, you cast the game away. See!

OLIV. I told you, I must now learn of you. Ha!

MAYN. What! You spy the victory?

OLIV. No, I—yes, I think I see the game (*Aside.*) She is here.

Enter FELICIA *at door.*

FEL. (*to* MAYN.) Did you ring, sir?

MAYN. Sophy! (*Aside.*) My breath flies away at her voice. Yes, yes, I rang. (*Aside.*) Now, to lose the game, and get himaway.

OLIV. (*Aside.*) I dare not leave them alone; I must first know,—they whisper! Is she really so simple? Are they come? Can accident?—Befall what may, I am armed, and, gone so far, will leave no point to chance!

MAYN. Now, father? (*Aside.*) Plague on his hesitation!

OLIV. You never showed such skill.

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MAYN. I see—it will be tedious: we will resume to-morrow. (*Rising.*)

OLIV. Your pardon—I shall beat you now. (*Playing.*)

MAYN. (*Aside.*) Is there no way of losing? (*Playing.*) There!

FEL. (*Who stands at the table, to* MAYNARD, *at the same time casting an inquiring glance at* OLIVER.) Ha! your king's in danger!

OLIV. (*Starting.*) What?—(FELICIA *points, with an air of simplicity, to* SIDNEY'S *play.*) True! (*aside.*) Yet could she speak another meaning? I am prepared.—(*Narrowly observing* MAYNARD, *and half-rising from his chair, as he plays.*) That was bold play; I move thus, and—

FEL. (*Rapidly moving a piece on the board.*)—Checkmate! (OLIVER *confused, sinks in his chair*—FELICIA, *forcing a laugh.*) Ha! ha! Sir, you have missed the game.

MAYN. Excellent! Why, Sophy, where did you learn chess?

FEL. Chess! La, I've been tired of it many a night.—A lady down with us—an old lady from the Indies—taught me chess to keep her company.

OLIV. Indeed!

FEL. Poor soul! she was rheumatic and bed-ridden, and 'twas her only comfort. Chess, chess, chess; I used to sit day after day, night after night, that—I declare, even now, I can't look at these tiresome bits of bone without yawning.

MAYN. For the first time they have wearied me. Father, good night; I shall read for an hour or less, and then, to-bed. (*Seats himself at table, takes book, and impatiently watches* FELICIA.)—Good night.

FEL. (*Taking candle from table, and affecting to light it for* OLIVER.—(*Aside to him.*)—They are come.

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OLIV. They!

FEL. (*Aside to him.*) Don't be afraid, they've made a friend of me; I'm the last to tell tales of a fellow-servant.

OLIV. Tales!

FEL. Why should masters know every thing? You have your friends to sup one night; I'll have mine another.

OLIV. Oh! then they owned they came to sup?

FEL. But I vowed not to tell master;—we're to have a dance, and—come along, we'll be so merry!

MAYN. Sophy, wait, I have a word to say to you.

FEL. To me, sir? (*aside to* OLIVER.) I'll get away from him directly.

OLIV. He may follow.

FEL. (*Aside to* OLIVER.) He sha'n't; for if't must be, I'll once more turn the lock.

MAYN. Sophy!

FEL. I never did see such a candle—Yes, sir.—(*Giving light to* OLIVER.) Good night, sir. (*Aside to him.*) I'll come directly. (*Curtseying him to door.*) Sweet rest to you, sir.

OLIV. (*Aside*) Yet, I'll make sure, and quickly send them hence. Sir, good night. (*Exit at door.*)

MAYN. (*Running from the table, and embracing* FELICIA.) And now, confess, fair mystery! or I'll put your lips to the torture.

FEL. Confess, sir! What, have you lost any thing?

MAYN. Yes, in faith—lost myself!

FEL. Lud! you frightened me! I feared you had missed some of the spoons!

MAYN. (*Holding her.*) Your history, my beautiful enigma! Disclose! I'd fain be merciful, yet have I strange thoughts of cruelty!

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FEL. I am—I am your prisoner.

MAYN. So! then the gaoler may take his fees.

FEL. (*Glancing at door.*) Hath the turnkey done his office?

MAYN. (*Locking and barring door.*) As wise as fair.

FEL. Is't fast? Art sure that we are—

MAYN. The Cyclops, with their hammers, could not force it. And now, with such a guard, let bliss—(*She avoids him*) —Nay, this morning, I was a dull, blind student—a man of marble; but thou hast fired the statue into life, and now I am—

FEL. (*Repelling him, and with energy.*) A gentleman!—still a gentleman!

MAYN. (*Aside.*) This is not art; no, the mind gives a sterner beauty to her face. Her eye is clear and cold as starlight; and her lip, so sudden white, speaks in its paleness. Tears! (*Approaching her respectfully.*) As you say, I hope, still a gentleman—nay more, a gentleman, so frozen by your reproof, that I fear, even Cupid's bow and arrows, kindled for firewood, might fail to thaw me.

FEL. (*Aside.*) Shall I tell all? I feel as yet, I dare not—His rashness might destroy him; first let them quit the house, and then—

MAYN. (*Placing chairs.*) Sit, Sophy—(*They sit.* FELICIA *endeavours to control her anxiety.*) Now, you have some history?

FEL. Who has not?

MAYN. Your's should be happiness. Might I write the future, trust me it should be blithe.

FEL. Indeed?

MAYN. Indeed. (*Aside.*) How her voice winds into my heart! Your coming here, is it not some jest—some desire to laugh at me? Surely, fortune never drove you hither?

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FEL. It was my fortune.

MAYN. Impossible. Come, own it was a frolic? You were set on? No? Your friends—I mean, your parents, know they not —?

FEL. At nine years old I was an orphan.

MAYN. Poor Sophy! so far our present fates accord. I am myself a solitary thing, without a single relative.

FEL. Without one?

MAYN. Without one.

FEL. Not one?

MAYN. Stay—I believe I have a cousin; but cousins, you know, go for nothing?

FEL. True.

MAYN. Still, your history? I listen, as I would hear a tale of fairy land. Your parents dead, there must be, at least some one, to whom you owe a debt?

FEL. Oh, yes! A deep, dear debt. I was a careless child when it was contracted, yet did the obligation make me, as with a charm, a thoughtful creature. To this hour no day has passed that I have not remembered it—loved it—held myself the richer that I owed it,—would not have cancelled it for all the power of queens!

MAYN. (*Aside.*) What eloquent sweetness! Your creditor was paid, with a dear usury, in such thoughts. Such a debtor must——

FEL. I fear he never thought of her.

MAYN. He! he! (*Aside.*) But now, I was a flame; and that monosyllable hath turned me into lead. Why should it—what is it to me? (*Looking round.*) Curse the place, it never looked such a dungeon. I—that little word has damnable magic! I seem to read nothing but *he*,—the very busts are opening their stony mouths to cry *he!* Well, Sophia?

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FEL. Sophia?

MAYN. Sophy—still Sophy. You, it seems, have not forgotten? You love him—him—yet?

FEL. I have not forgotten.

MAYN. Do not forget—but do not love.

FEL. Why not?

MAYN. For my sake, do not.

FEL. Your sake?

MAYN. I love you!

FEL. Sidney!—Sir.

MAYN. Love you with honour.—Will, for I feel it is my fate, give up all for you.

FEL. What? Your books?

MAYN. For that rarer volume, your loving heart.

FEL. Your telecopes?

MAYN. For that diviner light, your loving eyes: in that I'll hourly read, in them I'll gaze, and make the best happiness the truest wisdom.

FEL. You know not all my history?

MAYN. No,—but know enough.

FEL. It may be a riddle.

MAYN. I'll marry you, trusting to that fair face for a clear solution.

FEL. Indeed, I may deceive you.

MAYN. Then truth is but a sound. Deceit *is* in the world: I have found it, found it so fair, it well nigh made me sceptical of all beside. Yet, at the fairest, was it no more to the spirit shining through you, than is the light of fens to the pure and lasting diamond. I—were I to talk whole days, I could say no more than this,—but in it say my heart and soul,—I love you, Sophy—I love you! (*Falling on his knee.*)

(*Violent knocking at door.*)

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PURP. (*without.*) Good father solitary! Monsieur Unit! open the door!

FEL. (*In great agitation.*) They are here! For your life, do not—pray do not! (*knocking.*)

MAYN. Tom Purple! What mad intrusion!

FEL. (*Aside.*) I should have prepared him—my fears, no my selfishness hath ruined all!

PURP. (*Without.*) Open, Sir Eremite! I charge ye, by your iron girdle, death's head, and cross-bones, lift the latch, and let poor pilgrims in!

MAYN. (*To Felicia.*) Do not tremble—do not fear—he is a friend.

FEL. Oh no, for my sake, do not trust him;—from yonder window, is there no escape?

MAYN. Escape? Nay, Sophy, I feel the delicacy of your fears. Retire into yonder room: 'tis father Oliver's; a few minutes will rid me of him. He is, I say, a friend—a tried, noble friend.

FEL. Is he known to father Oliver?

MAYN. Known; but I fear me, little esteemed.

PURP. (*Knocking without.*) What! friar Bacon, if dumb thyself, let thy brazen head discourse!

MAYN. In, Sophy, in! (*He puts her in room at upper side, she anxiously watches at door.*)

PURP. (*Without.*) Sidney Maynard! Sidney! (SIDNEY *opens door, when enter* PURPLE, *intoxicated, holding* FATHER OLIVER—FELICIA *glides into balcony.*)

PURP. So! your hospitable door hath well nigh stripped my knuckles.

MAYN. Nay, Tom, at this time! What could have brought you here? (*During the following,* FELICIA *is seen to enter the room, and at intervals to appear watching and listening at the door.*)

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PURP. Your house-warming. There are a few friends—

MAYN. Now, Tom, go home; my house is in no state for guests.

PURP I knew your poverty and prepared for it. I sent such a hamper!—There's wine enough below to make a bath for Bacchus and Ariadne!

MAYN. Indeed, you perplex me!—I am not furnished with—

PURP. (*Holding* OLIVER, *who endeavours to get away.*) No! Of course you don't drink, but you shall stop and draw the corks.

OLIV. (*Aside.*) By this time they must be from the house—All I see is safe with him.

MAYN. Seriously, Purple, what could bring you here?

PURP. Your housekeeper! I wrote to Derbyshire for a Sibyl; and—ha! ha!—up comes a Flora.

MAYN. Surely, you have not seen —?

PURP. Seen her and heard her!—And then her lips!

MAYN. Lips!

PURP. Oh, hay-fields and a murmuring brook!

MAYN. Lips! You did not forget —?

PURP. Certainly not: I kissed her of course.

MAYN. Kissed!—And she—?

PURP. Acknowledged the attention.—(*To* OLIVER.) No, you don't stir.—Never look so grim, Sid! There are fourteen rare lads—they'll all be here.

MAYN. Here!

PURP. I wouldn't take you by surprise—I ran on and left 'em to follow—they'll—(*Voices are heard below.*) Huzza! Here they are!—(*Voices below sing and shout.*)

MAYN. Purple, this vexes me!—I insist—Father—tell the gentlemen, I am out—in bed—cannot see them.

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VOICES (*without.*)—Mr. Maynard!—Mr. Maynard!—Is he home?

FEL. (*Looking over the balcony.*) Yes, gentlemen;—yes!—

PURP. (*Seeing* FELICIA.) What! Another woman! and —(*To* SIDNEY.)—"I am making certain calculations, and to-night Venus will"—Oh, my dear Mogul!

MAYN. Pshaw! This young person is the housekeeper—the same you—kissed.

PURP. No—that young person's below!

MAYN. Below!

FEL. Yes—she's my cousin.

MAYN. So, Sophy, you have some relations?

FEL. No, sir,—for you know, cousins go for nothing.

MAYN. (*Aside.*) I am lost in doubt and—(*Noise without.*)

PURP. (*Going to balcony.*) Wait a minute, brave lads; good fellows; rare boys!—The door shall be opened.

FEL. It shall not. Mr. Purple, let me have some authority in my own house.

PURP. Have the purest despotism; I have the key.—(*shewing it.*) Oh, I was no sooner master of the citadel than I secured the gates.—No soul comes in or departs without the new governor's permission!

OLIV. (*Aside.*) 'Sdeath!—they are still here, then.

FEL. (*Aside.*) Happy adventure!—He is safe.

PURP. I ran against old sanctity, here, coming to the door, and brought him up for fear of any trick.—(*Noise without.*) I'm coming lads.

MAYN. Mr. Purple, I wish to hold your friendship: that I may do so, I insist on privacy.

FEL. (*To* SIDNEY.) La, sir, why not let the gentlemen come in?

PURP. Hearken to wisdom! There are but fourteen.

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FEL. To be sure, had we known, we might have been prepared.—(*Aside to* SIDNEY.) Let them enter.—Still, we can manage very nicely.

PURP. Hear her, Sidney; hear her! Every word's a jewel. —(*knocking without.*) I'm coming, lads; I'm coming.—Mr. Maynard, I wish to keep your friendship, but I must—yes, I must—keep the key.—Ha! ha! Coming lads.—(*knocking without. Exit.*)

MAYN. This must not pass. Father, follow me.

FEL. Nay, let the gentlemen enter.

MAYN. Would it give you so much satisfaction? Would it be—oh, Sophy! Come, sir! (*Exit, taking with him* FATHER OLIVER.)

FEL. Yet he is saved! These papers, found in my hurried search in that room, declare all;—a treasonable correspondence with the Pretender! How to dispose of them? If the men leave the house, some after circumstance may implicate Maynard: if secured by his means, and with them these proofs, his innocence is placed beyond all question. I will declare to him his danger: the visitors, so happily arrived, are numerous. Stay! could I but convey these proofs! (*Looking from balcony.*) Ha! I cannot mistake—'tis Simon! He sees me! (*Leaning over balcony.*) Good fellow, hasten—for life or death is in your speed—to the guard-house; present these papers (*throwing out packet.*)—not a word,—but fly! He is gone! Still, there may be other documents! Yet—yet an instant. (*Exit into room.*)

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SCENE III.

Apartment in the house of Maynard. Door in scene and at the sides. Enter SOPHY *and* WIDOW DUCKLING.

SOPHY. Dear me! Mrs. Duckling, who'd have looked for such treatment from your old sweetheart, the exciseman? What reason could he give?

WIDOW. Reason! I'll tell you. We had courted, as you know, for ten years. For ten years, every evening had he smoked and drunk at my fireside, his dear little piebald poney tied up at the garden gate. Well! so we went on, as you know, until I was sent for to London. And then, didn't my gentleman come galloping to me?—and didn't he, taking hold of my hand, with his face the colour of starch,—didn't he beg, and groan, that I'd consent? My heart wasn't a cinder, child; I said I'd marry the fellow.

SOPHY. What else could you do, you know?

WIDOW. I invited all my gossips—hired a fiddle—made the wedding-cake. The morning came! Oh, you should have seen me drest! Well, we waited and waited, and no bridegroom. I sat on nettles for two hours. At last,—

SOPHY. The exciseman came?

WIDOW. No; but he sent a little scapegrace boy to say —what do you think?—to say he had inquired about my property!

SOPHY, La! what did you say?

WIDOW. I said nothing. I thought the waggon might move him so I took my place. Would you believe it, the villain let me come off?

SOPHY. And never followed you?

WIDOW. Not a step: for all I sat down at the tail of the

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waggon, and for three whole days, eating nothing but my wedding-cake, I watched and watched for the least glimpse of a piebald nag. Oh! if my dear first husband knew how I'd been served 'twould bring the dear man from his grave.

SOPHY. It 's a good thing he doesn't know it.

WIDOW. It is a blessed thing! Oh, Sophy, while you live, despise the man who inquires about your property. But tell me, child, this is a nice place, isn't it? You'll give it up, quietly, because 'twas all a mistake?

SOPHY. Give it up? that I will!

WIDOW. I came away, early as it was, directly I got down at the Talbot, and—(*Laughing within.*) Dear me! there are those rakish gentlemen, who met me in the Park, and when I asked them for this house, said they were going to it, and brought me here.

SOPHY. (*Aside.*) Where can my dear lady be? (*They retire.*)

Enter MAYNARD, PURPLE, *and two Gentlemen.*

MAYN. Gentlemen, I repeat, this visit is ill-timed. I would be alone.

PURP. My dear Maynard, you are alone. There was a fine body of fourteen, but you kept 'em so long at the door, they dwindled away, and now you have nothing but the skeleton. To think the dogs should have skulked away in this fashion!

1st. GENT. Shameful! All of 'em married, too. A bachelor may have his reasons for slipping off; but a married man, who knows the worst—it's pusillanimous. Where's the wine?

PURP. (*To* SOPHY.) Come, pretty one,—where's the hamper?

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SOPHY. Why, sir, your friends—that is, Mr. Oliver's friends—

MAYN. Mr. Oliver's friends! Whom mean you?

SOPHY. The gentlemen—(what shall I say?)—in that room.

MAYN. In that room?

PURP. (*Looking through key-hole of door in scene.*) A snug party of some dozen, i'faith! We'll join 'em.

MAYN. Stay. I know not what to think: I will myself question him. Purple, go with your friends into that apartment. (WIDOW DUCKLING *curtseys to* MAYNARD.) Pshaw! Take with you these women. (PURPLE *and gentlemen take* SOPHY *and* WIDOW *into room.*) Be attentive—I may need you! A hundred former thoughts rush back upon me: words, looks, gestures, now considered, are grounds of strong suspicion.

(*Enter* FELICIA.)

Sophy!

FEL. You are betrayed! Your life, your honour in peril. Where are your friends?

MAYN. In that room.

(FATHER OLIVER *is coming from room in scene: when he pauses on seeing them.*)

FEL. At this moment, there are traitors beneath your roof: they, if you would clear yourself, must be secured. I have proofs, written proofs of treason! Father Oliver—

(OLIVER *having beckoned* DAGUERRE, LAVAL, *and others from the inner room: they stand with drawn swords.*)

OLIV. Demands them!

FEL. Ha! (*Rushes into opposite room:* OLIVER *and all are following, when* MAYNARD *throws himself before the door.*)

MAYN. Villains!

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OLIV. Gentlemen, an accident—a fatality shall I call it —has disclosed our plans. Yet, be firm, and we are safe. Mr. Maynard, we must secure that woman.

MAYN. I am unarmed; but not, whilst I have life shall you lay hand upon her!

LAV. Shall we have your friendship? Cry, long live king James! and join us.

MAYN. Traitors!

OLIV. We lose precious time: force that door.

MAYN. Villains. Help! (*The party struggle with* SIDNEY, *and drag him from the door:* PURPLE *and gentlemen are overpowered as they enter.* SIDNEY *is mastered by two of the conspirators, who stand over him, with their swords, when* FELICIA *enters from room and falls upon his neck.*)

FEL. Cousin!

MAYN. Cousin!

OLIV. Gentlemen, we are your masters: be wise, we will not abuse our power. (*to* FELICIA.) His cousin are you? I see it all—you love him. Give up those papers; or before he can speak a prayer, he is a dead man.

MAYN. Felicia! dear Felicia, never! I can die; live you, and bear witness to my honour.

PURP. Rascals! my ghost shall be at Tyburn on your hanging day.

OLIV. Gentlemen, your swords at his throat! Now, those papers!

FEL. (*Aside.*) I cannot save him! I have lost the means.

OLIV. Shall we strike?—the word?

MAYN. Fear not for me, Felicia; save yourself.

OLIV. That may not be so easy. Mr. Maynard, our stake is no child's play: if she remain obstinate, she too may suffer.

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MAYN. You cannot mean it? Murder, in cold blood—assassinate a woman? Are ye gentlemen—are ye human creatures? Kill me—torture me—strike every sword here through me—I yield myself to your most malicious cruelty! —But, if ye have one tender thought, one hope, one grace of manhood,—hurt not my cousin,—touch not my sweet, sweet Felicia!

OLIV. Will she give the papers?

MAYN. No!—(*They are about to strike*).

FEL. Yes: I will give them.

OLIV. Where are they?

FEL. I—(*Aside.*) what shall I say—I have them not here.

OLIV. Where are they?

FEL. There!—

[*An* OFFICER, *with a party of soldiers with fixed bayonets, enters from room at side, conspirators throw down their swords.*]

OFFICER. (*To* MAYNARD, PURPLE *and* GENTLEMEN.) You, gentlemen, although the situation in which I find you is proof sufficient of your innocence, may yet be called upon for further explanation. For these traitors, secure and remove them. (OLIVER, *and the rest of his party are guarded off.*)

MAYN. To what blessed chance do we owe this rescue?

Enter SIMON BOX.

SIMON. To the lady Felicia and myself. I have watched your house, nearly all night: for, to say the truth, I liked not its looks. I was staring at yonder window, when my lady here saw me, cast out the papers and—but I forget—I have two prisoners of my own in this room: one is lawful plunder, and I'll run and take possession. (*Exit.*)

PURP. Maynard, in my sober senses, I wish you joy.

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MAYN. (*To* FELICIA.) And you are my cousin?

FEL. Knew you not the little girl, whom eight years ago you snatched from out the river?

MAYN. Happy diver, to have brought up such a pearl!

(*Enter* SIMON BOX *and* SOPHY.)

But who is this—a cousin too?

FEL. She is my earliest, my truest friend. It is to her I owe the scheme that brought me hither. 'Twas she who was to keep your house.

Enter WIDOW DUCKLING.

WID. A little mistake, sir; I am the person, and I can tell you the whole story.

MAYN. Another time; I can hear no stories now: I can only wonder.

FEL. (*Aside to her.*) Sophy, take back your ring—and with it for your truth and service—competence.

SOPHY. Dear lady, if you would but keep that gown and cap!

MAYN. Keep them! I'll have them placed within a crystal shrine, for bachelors to make a pilgrimage to honour.

WIDOW. But, sweet sir—here is the letter from London to our curate—you will see that I am the person to keep your house.

MAYN. You shall not wholly lose your journey; but there is another lady, who, as I hope, will have the place you were to fill; if she look yes—(*looking to* FELICIA)—why, then, be all welcome to my house-warming; for here, behold my wife—the best HOUSEKEEPER!

CURTAIN.

BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON,
JOHNSON'S COURT, FLEET STREET.

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THE WEDDING GOWN.

A COMEDY,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

AUTHOR OF

"THE HOUSEKEEPER," "NELL GWYNNE," "THE RENT DAY,"
"JOHN OVERY," "BLACK-EYED SUSAN," &c. &c.

PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

LONDON:
JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

1834.

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LONDON:
BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON, JOHNSON'S-COURT,
FLEET-STREET.

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CHARACTERS REPRESENTED.

MEN.

Matthew Lubeski	MR. COOPER.
Beeswing	MR. FARREN.
Clarendon	MR. KING.
Effingham	MR. BRINDAL.
Creamly	MR. WEBSTER.
Junket	MR. MEADOWS.
Valise	MR. WOOD.

Servants.

WOMEN.

Augusta	MISS PHILLIPS.
Margaret	MISS TAYLOR.
Lady Aubrey	MRS. FAUCIT.
Mrs. Fossil	MRS. C. JONES.

SCENE, *London.*—DATE, 1796.

This Comedy was represented for the first time January 2, 1834.

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THE WEDDING GOWN.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

MATTHEW LUBESKI'S *Lodgings in the House of* CREAMLY.

Mrs. FOSSIL *looks cautiously in at door in scene, then enters, bringing in* JUNKET.

MRS. F. I knew they were both out. And now, boy, your news?

JUNK. News, mother-in-law?

MRS. F. Again? Mother-in-law! If your father did marry me, thank providence for it, and hold your tongue.

JUNK. I do thank providence (*aside.*) It might have been *my* fate. Poor father!

MRS. F. A pretty charge he left me; and prettily I'm repaid. Good-for-nothing! How have I brought you up?

JUNK. Like a top; and kept me up by the same means.

MRS. F. Scapegrace! How got you your reading and writing?—

JUNK. You know how: cleaning door-plates and carrying letters.

MRS. F. Your board—your clothes—your lodging?

JUNK. For my board, I never ate a dinner with a quiet conscience.

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MRS. F. You felt your unworthiness?

JUNK. No; I felt I was robbing the house-dog of his lawful property. For my clothes, the boys used to call me harlequin; and, for my lodging, 'twould have been excellent, if—

MRS. F. If?—

JUNK. If I'd been one of the pigeons. To be sure, my sleeping-place had this advantage,—I sometimes got an egg for breakfast.

MRS. F. This is to foster other people's brats! And who has put you in your present service?

JUNK. I'm not ungrateful. Since you've kept house for Mr. Creamly, 'tis true I'm become a judge of roast and boiled.—I own, I know what a snug garret is; wear a coat of one colour, and can, on holidays, riska sixpence at nine-pins.

MRS. F. And if you'd keep these comforts, see that you obey me closely. Now, your news? When Miss Augusta left the house this morning, you followed her wherever she went?

JUNK. No I didn't.

MRS. F. No! I desired you to follow her.

JUNK. I know it; and I tried to do so, but—

MRS. F. But!—but you hadn't brains enough for so simple a business.

JUNK. Quite the other way; I stopped, in fear of my brains. Patience, mother-in-law, you shall hear. I followed Miss Augusta from the house; slunk and winded after her like a hound; till, by-and-by, I began to think myself not much better. Then I lost sight of her—then I spied her again. In the midst of this, something said to me,—"Ralph Junket, this is poor work for a man!" Yet I went on, though I seemed to myself to get smaller every step I took.

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MRS. F. Fool!

JUNK. Not a fool, mother-in-law. For what I then felt, taught me this secret;—if ever I hear of a great man shrinking down to a very little one, I shall know he's been on some dirty errand, and lost his height upon the road.

MRS. F. Then you quitted the girl?

JUNK. Not till I discovered,—

MRS. F. Well?—

JUNK. 'Twas at the corner of a street,—

MRS. F. Aye?—

JUNK. When, walking rather briskly, I looked up, and saw that Miss Augusta—

MRS. F. Yes?—

JUNK. Saw *me*. As she looked—at that instant,—I felt two red-hot cinders shot into my cheeks! I twirled round on my toe, and, never once trusting myself to glance back, came with a scorched face, at full gallop home.

MRS. F. And this was all your success?

JUNK. I tell you, 'twas success I had to fear. If I'd prospered in this first piece of dirtiness, I might have grown conceited, and gone on. And now, mother-in-law, are you not ashamed?—

MRS. F. Boy!

JUNK. To set a boy to such a task? Watch Miss Augusta! Bless her! look in her face—hear her speak. I'll be bound, she has nothing secret but her prayers.

MRS. F. Indeed! Yet what should call her from the house so often,—what, particularly when her father's out, should keep her from home so long?

JUNK. It may be business; it may be pleasure; it may —what is't to us, what it may be?

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Mrs. F. Every thing. Hav'n't they lodged here these sixteen weeks, and what do we know of 'em?

Junk. We know Miss Augusta to be the meekest, sweetest thing; and for the old gentleman, her father, why he was a nobleman in Poland, in his own country.

Mrs. F. The more simpleton he to leave it. I should like to know what he does here?

Junk. I've told you. Mr. Lubeski is a—a patriot. Now, don't you know?

Mrs. F. I know it can't be very reputable; for I've looked all through the Directory, and found no such business.

Junk. Business! I tell you, mother-in-law, it isn't—

Mrs. F. No matter what it is; it doesn't seem a ready-money calling. Patriot! I only hope all the linen's safe. But now I'm here, I'll have a general search.

Junk. You'll search alone, then. (*Going.*) Fie! fie upon you!

Mrs. F. Fie! How do I know what's going on? Dear Mr. Creamly may be robbed,—or—

Junk. Dear Mr. Creamly! (*Returns.*) Mrs. Fossil, you know you have already had three husbands; and yet do I suspect—

Mrs. F. Suspect! What?

Junk. You are now curling your hair for the fourth. Dear Mr. Creamly! Poor Mr. Creamly!

Mrs. F. You vile—scandalizing,—But you sha'n't spoil my temper.

Junk. Nobody can; it's so preserved in its own vinegar. Entrap Mr. Creamly! Such a good soul! No; he's my master, and I'm bound to take care of him: so, mother-in-law, once for all I tell you, I sha'n't stand by, and suffer it.—(*Exit at door.*)

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Mrs. F. I'm rightly served; and yet when I brought him into the house, I—I did expect—but he shall pack. I'll have no eavesdropping, overlooking—stay, I forget my errand. If I could find anything about these lodgers—any letters—anything that might serve to throw a light upon their way of life,—

(*She is searching in table drawer, when* Mr. Creamly *enters.*)

Mrs. F. (*Starting.*) Ha! dear Mr. Creamly! What a way you have of surprising one!

Cream. Junket told me you were here. But, bless me, Mrs. Fossil, these are the lodgers' rooms; let us go down stairs.

Mrs. F. Lodgers! Ah, Mr. Creamly!

Cream. Lackaday! Anything the matter?

Mrs. F. These are serious times.

Cream. Mercy me! What's happened?

Mrs. F. To-day again bread's gone up a penny; and the chicken I bought yesterday for your morning's broth—a little thing that it was murder to kill—cost two-and-sixpence.

Cream. Surely! But the lodgers?

Mrs. F. Then a calf's-foot for jelly, 'tisn't to be looked at under—

Cream. The lodgers, Mrs. Fossil! What has bread, chicken, or calf's-foot jelly to do with the lodgers?

Mrs. F. All things, Mr. Creamly. For if you'd pay for necessary sustenance, how are you to lodge outlandish folks for nothing?

Cream. That's very true: I must speak to Mr. Lubeski. 'Twas but last night at the club, Mr. Bull, the president, twitted me for harbouring foreigners.

Mrs. F. Mr. Bull was always a very sensible gentleman.

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Sir, you don't know your danger. Here are you, a respectable silk-mercer, keeping people who may be smugglers.

CREAM. What! Miss Augusta?

MRS. F. I don't know that she hasn't a smuggling look: Smugglers, or coiners, or—

CREAM. Well, if they are coiners, at least they have some conscience; for I've never seen the colour of their money.

MRS. F. 'Tisn't for me to speak; yet, sir, I can't see you devoured and be quiet.

CREAM. I know the pains you take.—I—you recollect the white satin I shewed you on Tuesday?

MRS. F. That beautiful satin!

CREAM. I told you, it was ordered by Madame Millechoses, the milliner, for a wedding-suit. Now, there's a remnant of a few yards left, and if, as a small token, Mrs. Fossil—hark! Isn't there somebody?

MRS. F. Not a soul. Yes, sir, a remnant?—

CREAM. We'll talk down stairs. If *Mr.* Lubeski should find anybody in his room—

MRS. F. *His* room! Take my word for it, sir, that Mr. Lubeski—

(*Enter* MATTHEW LUBESKI.)

A good day to you, sir.

LUB. Good day. You were speaking of me?

MRS. F. Yes, sir; I was saying to Mr. Creamly, that you being out, I had looked in (*significantly*) to see all things were as they should be.

LUB. I am your debtor for much kindness.

MRS. F. (*Aside to* CREAMLY.) He forgets the sixteen weeks' rent. Ask him for it.

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CREAM (*Aside to* MRS. FOSSIL.) Leave us,—I think I will.

MRS. F. (*Aside to* CREAMLY.) Think! Be sure you do. Plague take him for coming as he did; for there must be some meaning in a gift of white satin.—(*Exit.*)

CREAM. (*Aside.*) I wish he didn't look so much of the gentleman. Any news from abroad, sir?

LUB. I am sorry, Mr. Creamly, I have as yet received none.

CREAM. When may any be looked for?

LUB. Daily, as I hope. But the present condition of the country —

CREAM. Very bad, no doubt. Ruin to business. Pray, what trades may now flourish best in Poland?

LUB. Just now, there are but three profitable callings.

CREAM. What may they be?

LUB. Spy—gaoler—and executioner.

CREAM. You mistake. I mean, what are your exports?

LUB. Brave men—virtuous women—and innocent children.

CREAM. That's your meaning. I ask as a tradesman. How do landlords get their rents? You used to export hemp and iron.

LUB. Yes; but now, they are all consumed at home. Mr. Creamly, I have expected, do yet hope, the means of meeting your demand. At present, I—I must blush to beg for further time. Things have gone most crossly. I may seem a rogue—an adventurer; do not think so. On the word of a gentleman, I—Mr. Creamly, I am a soldier, and so it had been with honour, I had felt less, kneeling by my coffin, facing twenty firelocks, than standing here your debtor.

CREAM. (*Aside*) I'm a great brute. His eyes are moist-

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ening, and — I'm a great brute. 'Tis plain he has no prospect of a penny: I'll be certain. Doubtless, Mr. Lubeski, you have had good learning?

LUB. Why, sir, I was once a school-boy.

CREAM. You know arithmetic?—You can calculate?

LUB. Very well. I have had your rooms sixteen weeks: now, sixteen——

CREAM. Burn the rooms! Live in 'em sixteen years, I won't ask you for as many pence. Mr. Lubeski, you mus'n't think because a man in fair trade loves a guinea, that his heart is all figures, like a ready-reckoner. You're an honest gentleman; and they tell me—though I don't approve of rebellion, I've been special constable myself —unlucky in a good cause. In one word, sir, pay me or not, as you can—I sha'n't sleep the worse in my second floor, for knowing I give you and your little girl shelter in the garrets.

LUB. Mr. Creamly, I have so long had to fight against misfortune, I want strength to meet a sudden kindness. I thank you. Did I not hope to pay you, I would not by remaining in your rooms,—

CREAM. Live in 'em for nothing, and you put money in my pocket. True. I used to keep stock here, but, dear heart! last winter the rats half-ruined me. But I was about to say—you wont be offended?—if you knew arithmetic, liked to keep accounts, read the newspaper and books, write a letter or so,—for time must lie heavy on your hands?—

LUB. It does—it does. Well, sir?

CREAM. I knew a gentleman—my landlord—who asked me about such a person. I declare, here's his card.—*(Giving card to* LUBESKI.*)*

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LUB. *(Reading card.)* "Mr. Beeswing, St. James's-square."

CREAM. At present he lives in the house of Lord Amberton. His lordship's daughter is to marry Mr. Beeswing's nephew, Mr. Clarendon.

LUB. And your landlord wants a clerk?

CREAM. Not a clerk. Merely a gentleman who can cypher, read and write: not a clerk. But I must leave you. *(Going—returns.)* A hundred pardons. How is Miss Augusta? I've scarcely seen her these two days.

LUB. She is well. Being myself frequently from home, she finds society in the family of a fellow-countryman and brother exile.

CREAM. Yet a word. You know Mrs. Fossil, my housekeeper? If she should hint at your rent, just to oblige me, put a bold face on it—bluster a little, and, if need be, offer to shew her my receipt in full.

LUB. Why should I act such falsehood?

CREAM. To save my character; for if 'twere known I was an easy man, 'twould ruin me. 'Tis my plan. I never forgave an account, without making my debtor promise to give it out that I had driven him to rot in a gaol. When I was overseer, 'twas my rule not to give a shilling from my own pocket, till the pauper had bound himself to abuse me everywhere as a stony-hearted fellow, that hanging was too good for. Now, if Mrs. Fossil—

LUB. I trust, sir, by speedy payment to—

CREAM. Not a syllable. Look on these garrets as your freehold. You've brought me luck. Since you've lived here, I've done more trade than in any season, since the swallows built in the kitchen chimney. Only humour me, and

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say hard things of me; call me a severe man—a miserly man—an unfeeling man,—but I shall take it as a great favour, that you never call me,—an easy man.—(*Exit at door.*)

LUB. My landlord's odd talk has warmed me like a draught of wine. Yes, after all, it is a good world. We are poor fools, and make sad mistakes; but there is goodness, hived, like wild honey, in strange nooks and corners. Let me think. There is now no hope of any remittance. I am a beggar in a foreign land. Without a hope—without—*(his eye glances on the card in his hand)* stay, shall I see what this may offer? What! become a servant—a hired menial? See myself? Myself!—Can I see the iron fingers of want pinching a child's cheeks? Pride, stay here with the bare walls! I'll cross the threshold a new and humble man. *(Looking at card.)* "St. James's-square—St. James's"—I recollect—yes—*(with an effort, suppressing his feelings)*——I think I can find the way.—*(Exit at door.)*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in the House of LORD AMBERTON, *St. James's-Square. Discovered* LADY AUBREY *and* MARGARET, *looking at laces, &c.* AUGUSTA *waiting.*

LADY A. No, Lady Margaret; this is the lace. I declare a spider's web is thicker. This lace, with—why, you're no more concerned about your wedding-dress, than if it were your shroud.

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MARG. No, madam: for in truth I can't see the difference. If I'm not to live happily, I care little what I'm buried in.

LADY A. *(Aside to her.)* Before this person! Consult your self-respect. See, this lace.

MARG. Yes, very pretty—I have no judgment. *(Suddenly to* AUGUSTA.) What do you think?

AUG. 'Tis very handsome, madam; yet this, to me, appears still more delicate.

MARG. So it is: it shall be this. *(Aside to* LADY A.) You hav'n't noticed her; she's very beautiful.

LADY A. Very—for a milliner.

MARG. *(Aside to* LADY A.*)* Then, her manners—her appearance. *(To* AUGUSTA.*)* Have you been long with Madame Millechoses?

AUG. No, madam.

MARG. You're not my countrywoman?

AUG. No, madam.

LADY A. Now, Margaret, conclude your choice. I have twenty different things to despatch; letters to write, orders to give,—

MARG. Dear madam, let me teaze you no longer. This young person and myself will arrange every thing.—(LADY AUBREY *sits at table, writing.* MARGARET *comes down with* AUGUSTA.)—We will say this, then; and, for the rest, why suppose 'twas yourself to be married, and—

AUG. Madam!

MARG. Make the gown after your own heart. I'm sure you hope to be married. I'd lay my life you crossed the sea with wet eyes at leaving somebody.

AUG. I left my country—left my home—left—

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MARG. Your sweetheart, I'll vow by your looks? There! white and red,—and your little hands like any stone

AUG. I fear, madam, I waste your time. I will see your orders carefully followed.—

MARG. Don't go. I do so want a friend! Tell me, did you ever read Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia?

AUG. Never.

MARG. I wish you had; then you'd pity me.—Then you'd feel what it was to live all your days in a beautiful country-house, with fields and gardens, and trees, all like so many old friends; to run where you like, to sing what you please, to say what you think,—and then, at a word, to be brought to London, to be built up with silks, and bones, and brocades,—and to be made to look, move, and speak, as though you were fixed in a gold frame; till a gentleman you don't care a pin for, comes to hand you out, and make you—as they preach to me—a happy woman!

AUG. And he will—be assured, he will. In due time your heart will receive him.

MARG. I fear my heart is a very little one; and somebody's there already. Hush! my lady. Pray, come to me again. I like you; my old servants were left at the Hall. I wish you'd come and live with me; my father will not refuse me.

AUG. I have a father, lady, who would not spare me. Yet, I feel your kindness, truly feel it.

LADY A. (*Coming down.*) Now, Margaret, have you at last decided?

MARG. (*Sighing.*) Yes. I shall be fine—very fine.

LADY A. (*To* AUGUSTA.) To-morrow, then?—

AUG. To-morrow, madam.—(*Exit.*)

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MARG. What a face of goodness! She reminds me of the shepherdess Urania, who, plucking the thorn from the lamb's foot, looked—

LADY A. Nay, Margaret, you must not talk Arcadian in St. James's: such prattle should cease with your girlhood. (*Rings bell.—Enter* SERVANT.) Let this letter be taken to Mr. Effingham.

SERV. Mr. Beeswing bade me ask if your ladyship was to be seen?

LADY A. By him, certainly.—(*Exit* SERVANT.)

MARG. A letter—to Mr. Effingham?

LADY A. You and he met frequently when children?

MARG. Before he went to Oxford we were never a day apart.

LADY A. I have heard as much.

MARG. He lived only six miles from the Hall; and many a night when his tutor thought him locked in, fast asleep, he and I were sitting happily together in the little hermitage. Poor fellow! to see me, he has often dropped from his window, at the risk of breaking his dear neck. I doubt it's more than Mr. Clarendon would do.

LADY A. You know not that.

MARG. Well, this I know—I'm almost wicked enough to wish he'd try.

LADY A. For shame, Margaret! The early death of your mother, with the foreign employment of his lordship, left you too free at an age requiring the most tender vigilance. You must now forget that Mr. Effingham,—

MARG. Forget! Why, he gardened for me—fished for me—borowed books for me—painted for me—petted my pug-dog, and taught my bulfinch to whistle.

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LADY A. You are now to become Mr. Clarendon's wife. You know, your father's fortune is a ruin.

MARG. I'm very sorry; but I'm not quite sure he has any right to use his child's heart to repair it.

LADY A. By this marriage, you relieve your father from anxieties, which else, quickening his illness, might make you, Margaret, an orphan.

MARG. I'm very unhappy! I love my father dearly, but—I—I won't marry.

LADY A. Margaret!

MARG. I won't; or, if I do, I'll have such revenge! I'll spend the pin-money you talk of in marmosets and parrots; my house shall be open to all the world, yet my husband feel the only stranger in it. If Mr. Clarendon dare marry me, I'll turn his whole fortune into china—I'll break his heart—and I'll—I'll call you old auntey to my dying day. (*Exit.*)

LADY A. I feared this. 'Twas fit I should see Mr. Effingham; his visits here were most imprudent, till Margaret were safely married.

Enter BEESWING (*speaking as he enters*).

BEESW. Safely married, said you, my lady? Thinking of the young couple? Well, I don't like to have people sighing and languishing, when they might be happy at once.—Let the day stand as we appointed.

LADY A. If his lordship's restored health—(BEESWING *shakes his head*) Heavens, Mr. Beeswing! have you seen my brother?

BEESW. Just come down stairs from him.—Worse this morning.

LADY A. Worse! What are the symptoms?

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BEESW. Another doctor. He makes the third: my lady, few constitutions can stand such attacks.

LADY A. Really, sir, you have an enviable stoicism for the afflictions of others.

BEESW. Afflictions! Vapours, my lady; with, perhaps, a dash of gout Now, if my lord Amberton, instead of a nobleman, were a—a drysalter,—

LADY A. Mr. Beeswing!

BEESW. A leather-seller, or a tallow-merchant—what with the markets, his clerks, and his counting-house, he'd want time to waste on illness. But, my lady, with you high folks, whenever a sickness shews its nose in a family, you treat it with so much pomp and ceremony, it can't make up its mind to leave you. My wonder is, that death itself doesn't oftener come among you.

LADY A. Mr. Beeswing!

BEESW. You do so tempt him with gilt-nails and velvet, and paint his visiting card so finely outside your houses. For my Lord Amberton,—

LADY A. Your pardon; I have not seen his lordship since last night. Intellects, whose strength I must admire, though cannot emulate, may think me weak. I avow, and retire under, the enormity. (*Curtseys and exit.*)

BEESW. A very tolerable sneer. (*Walks about.*) I wish I was at home again. A poor ox, driven through St. James's, staring at the odd sights, and stunned by the strange bustle about him, doesn't miss his grass and clear water more than I—whilst wandering through this fine palace, and seeing little but my own face in fifty mirrors—long for my quiet box at Camberwell, my garden, and my greenhouse. But, as 'tis to please his lordship, I visit him till my nephew marries,—

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(*Enter* SERVANT.)

Well?

SERV. Somebody, sir, begs to see you.

BEESW. A gentleman?

SERV. No, sir; a person. He refused to give his name.

BEESW. Shew him in—(*Exit* SERVANT). Stay—Another genteel beggar, I warrant; with a set face, and a set speech. I'm fairly hunted by 'em.

(*Enter* LUBESKI, *shewn in by* SERVANT, *who goes off.*)

I thought so. (*After a pause.*) Dumb? He's taking measure of my countenance for one of his long stories; making up his mind, whether his wife shall have died last week, or brought him a brace of boys yesterday morning; whether he has been ruined by a friend, or bed-ridden six weeks with a fever.

LUB. (*His manner abashed and hesitating.*) I trust, sir, I shall be excused the liberty—

BEESW. (*Aside.*) I knew it.

LUB. Of this self-introduction. I am induced to wait upon you—

BEESW. (*Aside.*) Having heard of my great benevolence. That must come now.

LUB. In consequence of—(*Aside.*) 'Sdeath! I cannot go on: there's a something in his manner that curdles my blood. I have, sir, to solicit—(*Aside.*) He looks at me with eyes of brass; I cannot speak to him.

BEESW. (*Aside.*) I see the end of this: he'll thrust a petition, with twenty forged names into my hand: pull out his handkerchief, and wait for a glimpse of my purse. I don't like the fellow's face; 'tis certain he lives by distress, he's so genteel upon it.

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LUB. I—(*Aside.*) Psha! courage!—Sir, permit me to ask, if—

BEESW. Permit me. How's your wife? You have a wife, of course?

LUB. No, sir.

BEESW. I forgot; you buried her last week?

LUB. Sir! It is ten years since I endured that loss. (*Aside.*) Patience!

BEESW. But your poor six children?—is it six or seven?

LUB. Neither, sir.

BEESW. No wife—no six children? Then you beg on your own account?

LUB. Beg! beg!

BEESW. I can't be wrong? Don't you come to me for relief?

LUB. Say, she who is in heaven was yet in this cold world; that she and children, all were famishing; if I did stoop to beg, I would as soon put up my prayer to a wall of flint, as look in that granite face, and speak it.—(*Going.*)

BEESW. Granite face! (*Aside.*) Come, he's even with me there. Stop! I—I—why you needn't glare at me so! I'm neither wizard nor devil.

LUB. Sir, you are a rich man; providence has gathered about you every happiness. Devil! If men do seem devils, it is when made drunk and callous by the bounty of heaven, they abuse its goodness to mock and mortify their fellow-men. Sir, I did not come to beg.

(LUBESKI *is going,* BEESWING *follows, and seizes his hand.*)

BEESW. Not so fast; I like you.—You are a plain-spoken man—a noble man. I ask your pardon; I tell you

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I ask your pardon.—I wouldn't say more to a king, I wouldn't say less to a shoe-black. The truth is, I thought I could read features; I find I'm a dunce. And I say, when you talked about granite, perhaps, you had the same conceit? I hope to prove you as great a dunce as myself. I confess, I might seem hard and sudden; for if I pity the fellow who has no compassion, I detest the scoundrel who abuses it. Charity is such a lovely creature, my blood comes up when I see a set of rascals—and there's a pretty knot in this town—trying to impose upon her. And now, sir, if you please, we'll suppose neither you nor I have spoken, and you are just come to tell me your business?

Lub. I was informed, sir, by Mr. Creamly, that you wished to engage—

Beesw. I see, sir. Again, I ask your pardon. Why, yes, sir; I—but pray be seated.—(*Places chairs: they sit.*) I did speak to Creamly about some one as a sort of clerk.

Lub. It is to solicit that office, sir, I have presumed to wait upon you.

Beesw. There is but little to do. My wealth is no longer embarked in trade. Still, there are a few rents to gather in—with some plain accounts to keep: you are used to the employment?

Lub. In my time, I have been steward many years.

Beesw. To a large estate?

Lub. A princely one.—So the owner thought it.

Beesw. And who was he?

Lub. He was not of England.

Beesw. And how lost you your stewardship?

Lub. The owner lost his lands—his all.

Beesw. Gambling, I suppose? I never by chance hear

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the rattling of dice, that it doesn't sound to me like the funeral bell of a whole family. I see; your master played a losing cast—he was a gamester?

Lub. The game was terrible he ventured; the loss beyond all remedy. The hearts of his family—his household—his own heart—were staked upon the throw.

Beesw. Madman and fool!

Lub. No, sir; for when men play the game he played, even angels suffer with them when they lose.

Beesw. What is this? What game is it you mean?

Lub. (*With suppressed emotion.*) The game of free man against tyrant; the game which makes man in all places and in all griefs worthy of his mind and image,—or at his own hearthstone, renders him a felon and an outcast.

Beesw. Go on.—I am ashamed—I,—pray, go on. He lost all, you say?

Lub. All. His fields were ploughed by desolation—slaughter and fire were in his home; as you say, he lost the cast.

Beesw. God bless him! The time may return, when—

Lub. *Must* return. The spoiler has his winnings,—ashes and bleeding carcases. Still there are bones, though now but paste, shall be as steel to play the game again.—Pray, excuse me, sir; you have touched on recollections that, I fear, take me from myself—I ask your pardon. As I said, I have served the office of steward.

Beesw. (*Aside.*) He's a fine fellow—a very fine fellow. I don't so much want a steward as a kind of companion—for I'm about to lose my nephew—to read and write, —you know what I mean?

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LUB. I hope, sir, on trial you may find me worthy of of your service?

BEESW. No doubt: I am glad you are the first to offer. Know you any one in England, who——

LUB. I lodge at the house of Mr. Creamly.

BEESW. I mean, know you any body you could refer me to—'tis only a form—for your character?

LUB. Sir! (*Aside*) I should have expected this.

BEESW. You are aware, 'tis usual to ask the question?

LUB. It is usual, sir.

BEESW. Can you refer me to no one besides Mr. Creamly?

LUB. To no one.

BEESW. 'Tis unlucky. Have you no papers—no certificate of integrity from your last place?

LUB. None.

BEESW. None?—no testimony?

LUB. Now I think again, I have that which may pass for one.

BEESW. Where is it?

LUB. There.—(*Taking an order from the inside of his vest, and giving it to* BEESWING.)

BEESW. Why, what is this?

LUB. The order of the White Eagle.

BEESW. How!—yours?

LUB. (*Rising*) My father's—presented to him on the field of battle, by John Sobieski, king of Poland. It is one of the proofs—and one I did not think to show—of family fidelity to our masters.

BEESW. What a wise old fool am I! Now, I comprehend; you were your own steward;—'twas yourself, who—give me your hand; you are welcome—heartily welcome.

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You shall go home with me—for you mustn't think this my house; no, nothing so fine; no gilding—no painting; all plain oak and walnut at Camberwell. I have done you wrong, sir.—I must have seemed a coarse-grained, carkish old hunks; depend on't, if somewhat rough outside, I'm not all husk.

LUB. I hope, sir, by my future service—

BEESW. Service! be from this hour my companion—my friend. After the wedding, we'll go home, and you shall tell me all your wrongs, and I'll—I'll swear an accompaniment Why, we'll get over the time bravely! we'll dig a little, and fish a little, and read a little, and sing a little; and, to sum it up, we'll be two jolly, young old boys. Not a word; I say, we will. Now, I know I'm not deceived; you are a fine fellow. And, as you have been used scurvily for some time, you shall henceforth live in lamb's-wool; aye, and you shall go to your grave down easy steps, comfortably carpeted. Only let Ned—eh, here he is.—

(*Enter* CLARENDON.)

(*Introducing him to* LUBESKI.) My nephew, sir, Ned Clarendon. Ned, this is—(*aside*)—I wonder what's his name, —my friend. A lucky dog, sir; going to marry a beautiful creature; an angel,—isn't she, Ned?

CLAR. Sir, my humility will not suffer me to deny the inequality of the match.

BEESW. No spoilt town miss, but country flesh and blood; fresh and healthy as her own hawthorns. But, come sir, we won't keep him from his devotions.—(*Aside.*) I'll send immediately for Creamly;—yes, hear what he says, and take his lodger off his hands. This way, sir; the youngster wants to get rid of us—he's devoured with impatience till we are gone. Oh, Ned! Ned! thou art a fortunate rascal.

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—(*To* LUBESKI.) Sir, again and again, you are welcome. (*Exit* BEESWING, *shewing off* LUBESKI.)

CLAR. Why, the girl is pretty enough. Yes; 'twill please my uncle—I'll marry her; make her a fond husband; become an affectionate father; and, indeed, be a most exemplary illustration of all the tombstone virtues. And yet, why did I travel? Had I so much reason, I must go lose the best part of it abroad? Were there not lovely women at home, that I should cross the ocean to pine for a shade,—a mystery? Nay, that's it. Who could she be—whither could she go? Had she remained, I might in due season have lost the goddess in the woman. No; impossible.

(*Enter* EFFINGHAM, *followed by* SERVANT, *who goes off on the opposite side.*)

Effingham! Why, I never saw you so damped—so clouded! In fact, with such a marrying look. What is it?

EFF. (*Aside.*) No; he has not the lynx-eyes of her ladyship; he cannot suspect. Nothing; indeed, nothing. Marrying! Ha! Clarendon, you'll be a happy man.

CLAR. Effingham, why did you eschew the church? You'd have shone as ordinary; you prophecy future bliss with such a Tyburn air of consolation.

EFF. But with Margaret—with her disposition—her face!—

CLAR. I have travelled—have seen faces.

EFF. You're an infidel to name them against looks at home. Is not the beauty of Englishwomen?—

CLAR. Most beautiful; nay, 'twould be divine, if they didn't think their beauty like champagne,—better for being iced. With beauty, I'm a cosmopolite: now, you are a prejudiced Greenlander, passionately devoted to your own snow. I allow,—Margaret is handsome.

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EFF. And so formed by education; her mind, trained in the country,—

CLAR. Country? Nay, you might say in a kitchen-garden.

EFF. Clarendon!

CLAR. All her sentiments—at least, to me—so smell of thyme and sweet-marjoram. How comes it, Effingham, that you yourself did not select Margaret? You, who were children together—who made love, I may say, biting the same apple?

EFF. We have certainly been acquainted from an early age, but—

CLAR. Then how is it, since your intimacy commenced from the nursery, it didn't tend to the same point?

EFF. Had it been my wish, my limited fortune had silenced it.

CLAR. When I was a schoolboy I didn't blind myself to an orchard, simply because I hadn't wherewithal to buy the fruit. Nor are you the man to weigh your heart against a money-bag—to count impulses with guineas. The truth is, you didn't like the girl; no, 'twas reserved for me to be the victim.

EFF. Victim! If you seriously think so, for her sake break off the match.

CLAR. For her sake I must be sacrificed. The poor girl would go distracted.—You can't conceive the intensity of her affection.

EFF. Intensity! At least then she is an exception to the ice you spoke of?

CLAR. No, indeed; she was at first cold and chilly enough; but, hang it! even in England, it doesn't freeze

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all the year round. And, after all, I must allow, she has sensibility and beauty,—and, besides, a passion for me which is certain of at least my gratitude.

EFF. (*Aside.*) Can this be his illusion, or can it be really so?

CLAR. Thus, I persuade myself I shall at length subside into the decencies of matrimony, and become a respectable husband.—That is, though I may feel my chains, take especial care the world shall not hear them clank. 'Tis a prudence that often passes for happiness, and may serve with me.

Re-enter SERVANT.

SERV. (*To* EFF.) Sir, lady Aubrey awaits you.

EFF. I attend. (*Aside.*) Now, for her ladyship's commands; if they be as I surmise, and Margaret be not really fickle, I have a plan that shall defeat fortune at her worst. (*Exit.*)

SERV. (*To* CLAR.) Shall I tell my lady Margaret, sir, you are here?

CLAR. Eh?—yes. (*Exit* SERVANT.) My Cupid must be of the dullest to need such a remembrancer. (*Musing.*) When my uncle first pressed the match, I carelessly assented. I thought 'twould be at most a matter of indifference; but, as the time draws near, my heart begins to stir a little—to feel certain quiverings,—stay; do not these thoughts come too late?

Enter VALISE, *hastily.*

VAL. Sir—sir—sir!

CLAR. What wonder, now?

VAL. I—I hav'n't breath to tell it.

CLAR. Go, take breath,—I can wait.

VAL. Two words, sir;—Dresden—the lady!

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CLAR. What! Dresden! Speak—what of her! Speak, I say—speak! Though you are strangling, speak!

VAL. She's here.

CLAR. Here!

VAL. These eyes have seen her.

CLAR. When—where?

VAL. Not five minutes since, at the house of Mr. Creamly. I'll tell you all, sir.

CLAR. Stay, now—go on.

VAL. Your uncle, sir, sent me just now to tell Mr. Creamly to wait upon him. I ran to his house, when, who should I see at the window, but the very young lady you were frantic after at Dresden; the very young lady about whom you nearly killed your humble servant.—

CLAR. I will yet kill you, you scoundrel!

VAL. Sir!

CLAR. What lie—what imposition have you fabricated? It wanted but this to drive me mad. Seen her!—it cannot be—it is impossible.

VAL. I won't dispute that, sir; but as I'm a Christian footman, it really is. I saw her, sir, at one of the windows —(*Aside*)—I dar'n't tell him the garret. I don't wonder, sir, you are surprised; for myself, if a thunderbolt had knocked me down, it couldn't have more astonished me.

CLAR. You persist in the story? You—my good Valise, are you certain?

VAL. Oh, sir, I watched her about too long at Dresden to forget her: and then, sir, your passion when at last I missed her, was so red-hot, it burnt every feature she had into my memory. Besides, I have inquired,—

CLAR. Yes?

VAL. Inquired of Creamly's man—a foolish, friendly

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fellow—and he tells me she is a foreigner not long in England: that—why, sir, what's the matter?

CLAR. (*Aside*) I am sick—death-sick. Fever and ague seem at once upon me. Now, I feel as if I could dance, sing, weep! She is here. Here! what an age of hope, dread, bliss, misery is in the word! Countries between us, the place unknown, it seemed a beautiful vision—a sweet and mournful dream. But,—here!

VAL. Sir, I didn't think the news would change you so.

CLAR. It has changed me.—(*Aside.*) It has made me know myself,—and in good time. What I thought indifference would have curdled to disgust—what I schooled myself to think visionary, would have become an actual presence. My good genius has preserved me. (*To* VALISE.) You can show me the house? And yet, ought I—dare I see her?

(*Enter* SERVANT.)

SERV. The lady Margaret, sir, attends you.

CLAR. I'm coming—say,—say I'm coming. (CLARENDON *goes off hurriedly on the opposite side:* VALISE *and* SERVANT *exchange looks, and exeunt severally.*)

SCENE III.

The Lodgings of LUBESKI.—AUGUSTA, *seated at work.*

AUG. I think I shall finish this part of my task before my father comes. Twenty times I have been about to tell him all: then, the thought of his proud nature, his love for me, has kept me dumb. No; did he know that for the last fortnight he had owed his sustenance to the labour of his child, 'twould break his heart. He has believed me

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with his friends; and they have promised to keep my secret; at least, so long as it can be kept.—(*Rising, takes a wedding-dress from box beside her.*) 'Twas kind of Madame to suffer me to bring home the dress. I can go on until near the time of my father's coming; and then when he has gone to bed, have the whole night to finish it. This is a wedding-dress; poor girl! she seems kind, ingenuous, affectionate.—I would I was working for a happier bride! Poor girl!

(*A knock, when* JUNKET *suddenly enters.*)

AUG. (*Standing before the chair, to hide the dress.*) Who's there?

JUNK. Don't start, miss; I have some news to tell you. Don't be alarmed; we are all safe. Mr. Creamly is sent for by Mr. Beeswing, and I've turned the key upon mother-in-law. You see, I'm not a fool. I know knavery from fair play. Now, when a gentleman asks me a delicate question, I satisfy myself that he is a gentleman before I answer. I warrant me; else I had never let the gentleman who is now in the house, cross the door to see you.

AUG. See me! A gentleman?

JUNK. 'Twas with tears in his eyes he prevailed upon me.

AUG And you have brought him—*here?*

JUNK. I didn't expose you. I told him you were still very rich, only you had a particular fancy for these apartments.

AUG. I beseech you, my good man, spare me the interview. If he be a friend, my father—

JUNK. He won't hear a word about your father; 'tis you, and you only.—(*Aside.*) Poor souls! he may bring a bag of gold for 'em. I'll show him in.

AUG. Do not—pray, do not. I am alone, and—

JUNK. Not alone, for I'm at hand; and trust me, miss, I know too well the prize in my keeping, to let any housebreaker come in and steal it.—(*Exit at door.*)

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Aug. Good friend,—gone! I'll make fast the door, and—
(Augusta *is advancing to the door, when* Clarendon *enters.*)

Clar. Madam! Augusta!

Aug. (*Aside.*) *He!* Oh, pride! fortune has no further malice.

Clar. Bar the door—shut out one, who for two years past has thirsted for this blessed moment? (*Approaching her.*) The pilgrim with bleeding lips at length stoops to the fountain; it were a cruel spirit that should bid the waters sink into the sand. I pray you, do not deny me. You have not forgotten me?

Aug. No, sir; I will not feign it.—I have not forgotten you. We met at Dresden.

Clar. I knew not then your worth.—I was as a poor man's child, who in his play-hours finds a priceless diamond; who, careless, loses it, and only learns from after-knowledge, that the loss has beggared him. You have not forgotten me?

Aug. No, sir; yet remember nothing which may give a meaning to your present language.

Clar. Nothing! True; no words were uttered, but surely love is not a spirit to be raised only by words.

Aug. Love!

Clar. Love, as strong, as deep as ever lodged within the breast of man. On your sudden departure from the city—

Aug. (*Quickly.*) I was called away. (*Recollecting herself.*) I told you, Dresden was not my native place.

Clar. 'Twas all I could discover. I knew not where you had fled, but knew my heart was with you.

Aug. I pray, sir, leave me.

Clar. Since then you have been my day-dream. Worn, wearied with its hopelessness, I was become a reckless apathetic being, when the news of your discovery gave me a new existence.

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AUG. I entreat, sir, leave me. If at any time I might have listened, that time is past. If you wish my peace—if you value my esteem—if you respect my honour,—leave me.

CLAR. What have I to learn? Your voice—your looks conjure up thoughts, which if true,—Augusta, what has happened?

AUG. Events,—fatal events. Pray, sir, spare me further explanation: let it suffice, we do not meet as before we met.

CLAR. Not as before? You are lost to me—you are another's? The blood, rushing to your cheek, blinds me with the truth. Augusta, you are—a wife?

AUG. No.

CLAR. No! And yet changed—yet,—(*Seeing dress on the chair.*)—What is that? I am in a cloud of mystery and dread; all else so plain, and yet that dress?—Is it not the garment of a bride?

AUG. It is a wedding gown.

CLAR. And your's?—

AUG. No,—a friend's.—(*Aside.*) I may call her so. No, I cannot love; for surely true love must kill such foolish pride.

CLAR. I have drunk new life from your lips.—Still, a word? Say, your heart is still the same, as when—

AUG. I came to Dresden?

CLAR. No—as when you quitted it?

AUG. It is.

CLAR. Then it is mine, and here again I challenge it! (*Kneeling to her.*) Here I hang the jewel at *my* heart, praying that neither time nor sorrow may dim its beauty; that what is the glory of my prime may be the gladness of my old age, and that having proudly worn it through a life I may sleep with it near me in the grave.

AUG. Edward!

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CLAR. Augusta, beloved Augusta! This joy is so sudden, so exquisite, it has unmanned me. (*Half-aside.*) What a deliverance! What misery have I been spared!

AUG. Deliverance! Edward!—

CLAR. (*Aside.*) She must know all; yet—

AUG. Edward, I have shewn you my naked heart.—What misery?

CLAR. Believing you for ever lost, and with you that deep happiness which you alone could give me, I was become careless of all beside. True, I laughed, jested, disguising by a hollow levity the disappointment that devoured me. I—I have an uncle; a kind, good man, the only friend I ever knew. My first hope blighted, I could refuse him nothing.

AUG. You should not.

CLAR. He has a friend; one, who though far above him in worldly rank, has yet been greatly aided by his means. 'Twas my uncle's wish to cancel all such debts by a union with the family. He proposed to me the daughter of that friend; I have promised to wed her—but, dearest Augusta, let love teach you charity,—I thought you for ever dead to me.

AUG. Think so still, sir; and perform your promise.

CLAR. Not if she brought the dowry of the world. You are restored to me,—restored—

AUG. Do not think it.—I tell you, sir, if the grass were growing over me, it were not less to be hoped.

CLAR. You do not pardon me—do not forgive an error proceeding from my very despair?

AUG. I do, from my soul, forgive it. May you be happy!

CLAR. Hear me!

AUG. Do not hope to stir me. Did you offer me the wealth and state of a whole empire, I would not take you for my husband guilty of a woman's broken heart

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CLAR. Speak not with such terrible composure.—Or have the two past years taught her, I thought the soul of tenderness, a cold tranquillity, that whilst it dooms the victim, is itself unmoved?

AUG. It may be, sir; for in that time I have studied at a school where death and outrage were daily teachers. I have had stern lessons, sir.

CLAR. Forgive me.—(*Passionately.*)—Augusta,—condemn, reproach me—but speak not, look not, so calmly!

AUG. Did I wish to use reproach, I might ask if it was a noble, a prudent course, to break in here upon my quiet—to subdue me with a flood of recollections,—and in that sacred moment, when woman shews her heart to man, and shewing, gives it,—was it kind to tell me you could not wear the gift?—I might ask, was it kind to seek me, only to tell me this?

CLAR. Do not think it! A blessed providence has reunited us—we never part again! I will explain all to my uncle, to Lord Amberton—lay bare my soul before the Lady Margaret,—

AUG. Margaret! Margaret!

CLAR. Gain her free assent, and return, Augusta—return to ask you of a father! (*Rushes out at door.*)

AUG. (*Supporting herself against the chair.*) Amberton! The lady Margaret! And this her wedding-dress! and I—I must employ the whole night to complete it. (*Takes the dress, making an effort to repress her feelings; the garment falls from her hand.*) Was fortune ever yet so wayward! (*Overcome, she sinks in the chair.*)

END OF ACT I.

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ACT II.—SCENE I.

Apartment in the House of LORD AMBERTON

Enter BEESWING *and* CLARENDON.

BEESW. Sir, I've heard enough; you're a coxcomb; a poor, vain fellow, who would play at cup-and-ball with the hearts of the whole sex.

CLAR. Sir, you promised to judge me charitably.

BEESW. So I have; and that's my verdict,—you're a coxcomb. Plain justice might call you a scoundrel.

CLAR. Sir!

BEESW. Phoo! I've no respect for injured looks, when they'd justify mean actions. What! sport with the affections of a confiding girl!—stand, in the face of the world, her pledged husband, and then, with no other warrant but your own fickleness, to blow her from you like a feather!

CLAR. You wrong me, sir.—I have told you, that an affection for one I had considered lost,—

BEESW. Yes, at Dresden. In the course of your travels did you visit Kamschatka, or touch on the Gold Coast? I have good reason for the questions: for as you seem to have carried about so much affection in small change, there's no knowing in what place you mayn't have been liberal. Why, release you from your present engagement, and in a month hence you'd beg my favour for a lady in black fox-skins, or a princess with her royalty tattooed in her countenance.

CLAR. And I had as lieve marry either, or both, as the lady your goodness has provided me. Sir, you never loved —your heart,—

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BEESW. How do you know? How dare you talk of my heart? Perhaps it's a snow-ball—perhaps, a cinder. Or is it, sir, because I've brought *you* up in it, you presume to question its material?

CLAR. Dear uncle, I would encounter any grief rather than your displeasure. I feel—am proud to feel—I owe you every thing.

BEESW. Keep your word—marry Margaret—and you have your receipt in full.

CLAR. Sir, it is impossible.

BEESW. Sir, I've lived three-and-sixty years, and in an honourable cause I don't know the meaning of the word. This I know; I'm under a contract to Lord Amberton; you are pledged to his daughter; and if you dare desert the girl, I'll—yes, for the credit of the family—I'll marry the wench myself.

CLAR. And why not, sir?—As you say, you are but three-and-sixty: your constitution is sound—

BEESW. As oak.

CLAR. Your habits, healthful and temperate—

BEESW. As a Brahmin's.

CLAR. You may yet have an heir, who—

BEESW. An heir?—and why not a dozen?

CLAR. Very true, sir; a crowd of little cherubs—a whole grove of olive branches.

BEESW. To be sure; and see them all brought up; and having lived to a green old age, see my darling cherubs become one by one perverse, flap-eared puppies—have all my promising olive branches turn to bundles of thistles. No, sir, you shall not dance at my wedding, whatever you may do at my funeral.

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(*Enter* LUBESKI.)

Ha, my friend! Thank the stars you have no fortune to cast away on disobedience. Look at this fine gentleman. I had picked him a wife from a thousand—he had accepted my choice; and now he comes with a blank, romance-reading face, to tell me he had made a previous bargain. You've been a soldier—used to discipline: if he were your own flesh and blood, wouldn't you shoot him?

LUB. Not without a trial.

CLAR. 'Tis all I ask.

BEESW. You've had it, and been found guilty. But, since you question the verdict, move for a new hearing: my friend here shall be one of the judges; aye, and to give you every chance, your counsel to boot.

CLAR. I accept him in both offices. (*Aside.*) If I can bring the old gentleman back to good humour, my cause is not so desperate. (BEESWING *and* LUBESKI *sit.*)

BEESW. (*Rising.*) I'll open the proceedings. (*Addressing* LUBESKI.) My lord, this rascal at the bar—

LUB. You mean—the unhappy man?

BEESW. No, the fortunate dog—for he's my nephew—four years ago, with a light head and a heavy pocket, quitted England. Whilst abroad he ate a certain quantity of maccaroni—pelted the women with sugar at the carnival—took a month's lessons on the guitar—fought two duels with a brace of German students, and broke the head of one French postilion: so much for his foreign acquirements. He returned to his foolish uncle, with his pocket weighing just as much as his head—leaving, as he now says, his heart behind him,—and bringing in its stead, sixpennyworth of the coin of the Cæsars—a

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necklace curiously cut from the lava of Vesuvius—and a Venus, wanting a nose, from the ruins of Herculaneum.

CLAR. So far I plead guilty. Yet, could I produce one, whose beauty—

LUB. It can't be received. Beauty can give no evidence, beauty itself being, time out of mind, an outlaw.

BEESW. A Robin-Hood in petticoats. Capital!—(*Seating himself by* LUBESKI, *and aside to him.*) Who taught you that point of practice?

LUB. (*Aside to* BEESWING.) A gardener's daughter, when I was eighteen.

CLAR. If not her beauty, may not her virtue speak for me?

BEESW. No; because it can't.—For virtue, attempting to gloss dishonesty, if it doesn't grow ashamed, and break down in the oration, ceases to be virtue.

CLAR. Sir, I have recently sworn a faith,—

LUB. The oath's irregular.

BEESW. (*Aside to* LUBESKI.) I don't know; I'm afraid he has kissed the book.

CLAR. A faith which, to break, would break my heart. I find I cannot longer argue in sport a cause so bound up with my being. In a word, uncle, it is in your power to make me a beggar, but you cannot force me to a marriage, which must henceforth doom me a wretch.—(*Exit.*)

BEESW. Make him a beggar! He sha'n't have enough to stock his two pauper hands with matches. Here have I chosen a beautiful creature, the daughter of—by the way, where's your Augusta?—you promised to bring her. She knows you are here?

LUB. Not yet. She had retired to bed before I

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reached home, and early this morning, as I found on rising, she was gone to pass the day with friends, my own country-people.

BEESW. I must see her.

LUB. You shall see her. But your nephew, sir, has he informed you who was his first election?

BEESW. Some unknown foreign wench—I ask your pardon; I mean, some pretty exotic. But if she were as rich as Queen Sheba, he shouldn't have her.

LUB. Poor young gentleman!

BEESW. Why, you are not on his side?

LUB. Yet you made me his counsel.

BEESW. True; go on; my mind's made up, so I don't fear to listen. Isn't my nephew a disobedient rascal?

LUB. No; since his affections were not in his own keeping, is he accountable for their loss?

BEESW. Yes—he had no business to travel with them. Then talks of the tyranny of love! Love! Cupid, sir, should be a patriot.

LUB. It's impossible; for he never had a fixed country.

BEESW. Then you'd have me consent to this vagabond match?

LUB. If the girl be found worthy,—yes.

BEESW. Shall I break my word?

LUB. Will you break your nephew's heart?

BEESW. A vulgar notion.—I grant, his neck or his leg may be broken; but, poets lie, the heart has no joint. There never was a broken heart!

LUB. Granting this, the lady Margaret would suffer little by her loss.

BEESW. I speak of young, riotous men; a woman's heart is a different thing. Like a singing-bird in a cage, if

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neglected, it starves and dies; but, for our hearts, why they're free birds of prey, vultures and hawks, or thievish magpies at the best. Tut! once joined, they'll be happy enough. Shouldn't I know, at my years, something of marriage, though I never ventured on its sea?

LUB. Yes; just as much as a man knows of the sea itself, who has only walked along the shore. He knows not how rashness or indifference may go down in sound timbers, nor can he conceive how watchfulness and harmony may keep alive the veriest wreck. If my daughter were destined for the voyage of matrimony, I wouldn't trust her to expedience, no, not if shipped in gilded oak: I'd give her to the good captain, affection; for he—and I have tried him—has the seamanship of a witch, and will keep above water, aye, though trusted to a sieve.

BEESW. Affection! And why, in good time, mayn't affection grow from indifference?

LUB. Because it is a dead stock. You may as well plant your walking-stick in your garden, and look to see it bud, as hope to gather from indifference the fruit that makes marriage palateable.

BEESW. (*Aside.*) I must listen no longer. I tell you, it can't be. The girl expects Ned for her husband: he has promised to marry her—he should have known his mind—of his free will promised, and he shall have her. And that I mayn't be made a party to injustice, I've arranged it all with his lordship—they are to be matched to-day. I'll come back to you in the study—I have yet a word to say to my lady, and—no! if any body must be unhappy, it sha'n't be the poor girl: he's in the wrong; besides, he's the stronger of the two, and if there must be misery, 'tis right he should bear the whole of it. Don't speak.—Let the

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marriage be once over, and we'll discuss it afterwards. (*Exit.*)

LUB. This change in my fortunes is so sudden, that, for a time at least, Augusta shall not know it. For should it not last—yet why fear it?—why doubt him, whose heart seems in every word he speaks?—who, in a few hours, has made me feel as an old friend? Dear Augusta! But I must arrange the few papers in my charge. I must hope for heavier duties, if I would have a lighter feeling of dependence. (*Exit.*)

Enter MARGARET, *cautiously, in hat and cloak, as from the street. She takes them off, puts them in room in scene, comes forward, and sinks in a chair.*

MARG. I am safe—and yet I tremble so; and every thing about the house looks so altered, and,—I ought to be happy, and yet I wish I could cry. Did I ever think I should have the resolution to steal a marriage? But it's all over—I have been a wife these full twenty minutes. Dear Effingham! Now, they can't part us. Lud! here comes her ladyship.—(*Sings, affecting composure.*)

" You may esteem him
" A child for his might—
" Or you may deem him
" A coward for his flight.—"

(*Enter* LADY AUBREY.)

Good morning, to your ladyship. (*Sings.*)

" But if she whom love doth honour,
" Be conceal'd from the day,
" Set a thousand guards upon her,
" Love will find out the way."

Isn't that the prettiest of ballads?

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LADY A. And it has a pretty sound sung by a damsel on her wedding-day.

MARG. (*Alarmed.*) Wedding-day!

LADY A. Mr. Clarendon, by his uncle, has pressed for and obtained your father's consent.—The saloon is almost prepared, the chaplain is summoned, and you have now left you but an hour of freedom.

MARG. Why, madam, I might as well be married in a prison. So sudden and so private!—a milkmaid would have more ceremony at her wedding.

LADY A. You know the state of your father's health admits not of the preparation which, else, might have been desired. Come, child, never fret at such an accident. You go to take a husband, and not to see a show. The happiest marriages are generally those at which simplicity, and not pomp presided.

MARG. Do you think so? No doubt. Now, you and my uncle were very happy?

LADY. A. We were, indeed. There are few such illustrations of conjugal love.

MARG. And yet, you made no display: for you were married at eight in the morning at a little white-washed church in a village in Cheshire; and, instead of having a crowd of fine friends about you, the pew-opener of fourscore was your bridesmaid, and the grave-digger was called from his work to give you away.

LADY A. What foolish tale is this?

MARG. Oh, no! Old Susan declared 'twas all a truth. And, whereas a bride usually leaves the house by the door, you, shrinking from ceremony, jumped out at the window. And then, for your wedding-dress,—

LADY A. Well remembered; I have kept your milliner

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waiting. I will send her, and soon return myself.—(*Aside.*) This comes, where there are young people, of keeping old servants. (*Exit.*)

MARG. Married! In an hour! No doubt, they have arranged the business very amicably. I am to be led out or not as it shall please Mr. Clarendon to choose or leave me. But I'll repay him for the slight of yesterday. To ask to see a lady, and then to quit the house! Stay, had he remained, Effingham might not have seen me, might not have won me to prepare for the worst, by marrying him this morning. I have but an hour before all is known: it shall be an hour of rare sport. I am not the child they think me—I am a woman now, as they shall find.

(*Enter* AUGUSTA, *carrying a box.*)

Ha! good-day. So, you have brought my gown? 'Tis very fine, I hope?

AUG. (*Displaying the gown.*) It is, madam, as you wished it.—(*Aside.*) An impulse—a feeling I could not control has brought me here. I felt I could not rest, until once again I had learnt whether yet she loved him.

MARG. It is very handsome. I did not think I should be half so well pleased with it. After all, there's something about a wedding gown, prettier than in any other gown in the world.

AUG. You feel happy?

MARG. Oh yes; I feel I shall be a very, very happy wife.

AUG. And yet, yesterday you expressed a fear that—

MARG. I own it—but that fear is all over. I confess, when I first saw this satin at Madame Millechoses, my heart quaked to hear it rustle. But now, you see, I can look at my wedding dress, and smile at it.

AUG. It is a fortunate change. Then your husband—

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MARG. My husband! Dear fellow! he'll be the best of creatures!

AUG. You think you shall love him?

MARG. Think I shall love him! I—only I don't know if 'tis right to let him know it, but, between us women,—I doat on him.

AUG. So suddenly?

MARG. The truth is, I loved him all along; only I was shy, and wouldn't own it. (*Aside.*) My tongue burns to tell her the whole story; but, no; now I must only trust my husband.

AUG. May your affection meet with a return!

MARG. I have no fear of that. Oh, you should hear him, you should see his eyes, when he vows he loves me!

AUG. (*Aside.*) Can it be so? Can such hypocrisy?—Poor girl! It is her own devotion that deceives her.—(*Going.*)

MARG. You are not going? Stay: you are not well?

AUG. I sat up late last night—'tis nothing more—I am very well. Again, I wish you all happiness. May your innocent nature never endure a moment's sorrow! May you both be happy!—(*Bursting into tears, and going off.*) God bless you, lady!

MARG. (*Detaining her, and gently forcing her into a chair.*) Now, you shall not leave me. Sit, pray, sit. I am sure something is at your heart? Your words, your manners, though I have seen nothing of the world, convince me you have known a better fortune. I am young, and they say, very thoughtless; but you may trust me as a sister. What has happened? I am sure you love somebody; and I am half persuaded that this dress has made you think, perhaps more than you ought, of him you love. Is it not so? No! Why, this accuses you.

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AUG. Accuses!

MARG. Look; you have been weeping as you worked. Stained my wedding-gown with tears! What an omen for a bride!

AUG. (*Aside.*) I was wrong to venture here. Alas! all my strength, my self-control is gone.

MARG. When all is settled—and you will be so surprised—will you come and live with us? You shall be my friend, no less.

AUG. Impossible: nay, it is impossible.

MARG. Yet, do not leave me.—(*Aside.*) How I should like to tell her the secret! They say I'm to be married in an hour.

AUG. So soon?—(*Aside.*) It is better that it should be so.

MARG. Married in an hour. Why, here comes my husband!

AUG. Let me begone—I beseech you, let me go!

MARG. No, no.—I mean—la! it's very foolish to mistake every body for one's husband on one's wedding-day. It's only Mr. Effingham, a family friend. Why, how you tremble! and you look as white,—go into my room.—Nay, you must not leave me; I shall want you to help me to dress. There—only a minute; I'll be with you directly.—(*Puts her into room in scene.*)

(*Enter* EFFINGHAM.)

Charles! What can bring you here?

EFF. The determination to assert my right, and protect you. I had scarcely reached my lodgings from the church—that church, Margaret, where we became for ever one—when my servant learnt from some of your father's household, that you were this day to be forced to a marriage

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with Mr. Clarendon. Where then should I be, if not where I may guard my wife from violence or insult?

MARG. Dear Charles, pray be calm.—All may yet end well; but, for my sake, don't look so terrible. Hark! isn't that Mr. Clarendon's voice?

EFF. I hope so.

MARG. He is coming here!

EFF. I am glad of it. 'Tis full time that all should be explained. And though I have no fear that his heart may suffer,——

MARG. Indeed, sir!

EFF. His pride may, possibly, demand some answer. —He shall find me ready.

MARG. What! you cruel, wicked creature, is this all your love, to marry me to make me a young widow? You shall not see him: I insist on your hiding yourself.

EFF. Margaret!

MARG. I beg you will. You'll not refuse your wife her first request? Go, and wait in—in my room.

EFF. 'Tis idle. Why defer what must be known?

MARG. But not yet. Come (*leading him to door,*) there's a dear; pray, come. You'll find nobody except my milliner; a charming, good girl.

EFF. Be it as you will.—(*Going.*)

MARG. Charles, you needn't quite shut the door. I mean, that is, of course you'll like to hear what the man has to say to your wife?—(EFFINGHAM *goes into room.*) He wouldn't hide himself at first.—And she, too, shook and turned pale, when—(*going to door*)—Charles!

(*Enter* CLARENDON.)

Mr. Clarendon!

CLAR. Madam, I come to petition your clemency. I have wronged you.

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MARG. I know your crime—it is forgiven.

CLAR. Forgiven! My uncle, then, has explained all? Charming, generous girl, let me bow and bless you for this mercy. You forgive me?

MARG. I forgive you. (*Aside.*) I'll make my husband listen, however. I am sure you had no studied intention to offend me?

CLAR. As I live,

MARG. I'm sure you hadn't. But events may so fall out to give the appearance of design to accidents wholly independent of ourselves.

CLAR. (*Aside.*) How have I mistaken this girl! Her sense is excellent.

MARG. And when assured of this, to punish is not justice, but hard tyranny.

CLAR. Admirable Margaret!—You cannot think how this forbearance adorns you. Never in my eyes did you look so beautiful.

(*Aside.*) Poor fellow! when he knows I'm married, I fear 'twill kill him. Forbearance is a great virtue: let us both study always to possess it.

CLAR. Henceforth, it shall be the aim of my life.

MARG. I hope you will judge mercifully of my conduct?

CLAR. After such proofs of its disinterestedness, I will champion it against the world.

MARG. This it is to act with candour; to at once avow an error, trusting for pardon to the sympathy of—of friendship.

CLAR. Excellent. Then you believe, Margaret, that though love cannot dwell in a heart, friendship may?

MARG. To be sure; friendship you know takes less room—it has no wings.

CLAR. And, therefore, may be more constant. Well, Margaret, such friendship may, *must* be ours.

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MARG. What! are we to be only friends when we're married?

CLAR. Married!

MARG. Then our friendship, if her ladyship speaks the truth, may begin in an hour.

CLAR. Can you have mistaken the purpose of my visit?

MARG. Certainly not. I confess, I complained to your uncle, who ventured some excuse for you. I then promised my forgiveness, and, of course, you come a penitent criminal to receive it.

CLAR. And my fault?—

MARG. Fault! Treason, sir, against love and good manners. To ask to wait upon a lady, and when the favour is granted, to leave the house, to run from her as though she was a ghost! Fault!

CLAR. I own, a gross one. Yet am I guilty of another crime, that—

MARG. Another! What a naughty man you must be!

CLAR. In truth, when you shall know it, I must rather hope for, than expect, your mercy.

MARG. Dear heart! Why, you look as serious as Mr. Vyse in the spelling-book. A crime! You hav'n't killed my monkey? My parrot's safe? And my beautiful china vase from Dresden,—that's it—I see it, by your colour, you have broken it to atoms?

CLAR. (*Aside.*) A silly, insensible creature! Madam, your monkey is, I trust, in vigorous health; your parrot, for all I have heard, yet secure; and for the vase from Dresden, I have some old associations about the place, which would just now invest the meanest thing from that city with a new interest, even though unowned by the lady Margaret.

MARG. Why, then, I can pardon any thing. Now, culprit, what is your offence?

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CLAR. Madam—(*aside*)—why hesitate with such frivolity? Madam, I can never marry you.

MARG. Sir!

CLAR. Distressing as the avowal is, it is necessary to prevent the misery of a union, which to one of us at least, would prove a bondage.

MARG. You will not marry me—you vow you will not?

CLAR. I cannot.

MARG. (*Aside.*) Oh, joy! Very well, sir; you thought I should cry at this? doubtless, had the vanity to believe I should faint. Now, sir, look at my eyes; and, for fainting, in all my life I never had such a disposition to dance. Alack-a-day! you doom me to the willow? You shall see I'll wear it as if it were a May garland!

CLAR. I am rejoiced at this—delighted to perceive I am so indifferent to you.

MARG. (*Aside.*) As yet, he must not think so. Indifferent! if there be another word, sir, to express the composure, the tranquillity of this moment,—I beg, sir, you will—will—(*affecting to weep*). I'll go and tell my father!

CLAR. Margaret!—

MARG. I'll tell your uncle—I'll tell the whole world. To be played with, laughed at, slighted! I wish I was a man!

CLAR. (*Aside.*) I wish you were! Margaret, ere I saw you, I had lost my heart.

MARG. Sir, 'twas the more hollow in you to address a lady without it.

CLAR. I came to avow my guilt, and beg of your generous nature, compassion and forgiveness. Nay, Margaret, it is impossible that you can love me so very, very devotedly?

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MARG. You don't know your own merits. I thought I didn't; but—but you're a wicked man. Here I believed I was to be married in an hour—and here is my milliner—and here she has brought my wedding gown, made so beautifully in the fashion; and pray, sir, what is to become of it?

CLAR. Marry somebody else before the fashion changes. Lady Margaret, you have heard my resolution; it is unalterable. I will not lengthen a scene which, painful to you, is, indeed, humiliating to myself. I wish you all happiness; but, that you may be happy, we must not wed. (*Aside.*) Thank heaven! that task is over. But a last trial with my uncle, and my destiny, for good or evil, is determined.—(*Exit.*)

MARG. Now, has Cupid been playing with Fortune, and won all her good gifts!

(EFFINGHAM *comes from room in scene.*)

Oh, Charles! Mr. Clarendon has rejected me! Won't you fight him? Did you hear how he cast me off?

EFF. Never was eavesdropper so vigilant. And, indeed, your pretty milliner—

AUGUSTA *comes from the room.*

MARG. (*Aside to* EFFINGHAM.) Hush! and back to your hiding-place. I—I command you.—(*She playfully compels* EFFINGHAM *to return into the room.*) Ah! me. So, after all, I shall not want my gown! Do you know I am forsaken?

AUG. I was an unwilling listener, madam. (*Aside.*) There is a levity in her words and looks that, I own, startles my first opinion. No, she never loved him!—(*Going.*)

MARG. Do not go. Now I recollect, I have a few words to say to Mr. Effingham—I told you, a very dear friend of

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the family—and will in a moment be with you. (*Aside.*) No; now, he need not, shall not stay.—(*Exit into room in scene.*)

Aug. Now, to quit the house. I tremble, lest I should encounter him.—(*Going.*)

Enter Beeswing.

Beesw. Heyday, damsel!—(*Aside.*) So, a beautiful lass! Why, I never saw you before? You are not of his lordship's household?

Aug. No, sir.

Beesw. And what—nay, there's no hurry—what brought you here?

Aug. I was sent for to—

Beesw. Sent for? What's your name?

Aug. Augusta.

Beesw. To be sure—I thought so—I guessed it. Augusta Lubeski? Give me a kiss. Tut! there's no harm, no shame to kiss an old man, who admired you before he saw you. 'Twas I who sent for you; though I expected Creamly would come with you.

Aug. You, sir,—sent for me?

Beesw. I! And if it hadn't been for my nephew, Ned Clarendon—

Aug. (*Aside.*) His nephew!

Beesw. I had found you out myself. You are a good girl—a virtuous, dutiful girl. I have heard all your story.

Aug. My story!

Beesw. All your sufferings, and all your goodness; heard it from somebody who loves you dearly; aye, and from somebody you dearly love.—A somebody who is now in this house; though he little thinks I have sent for you here to surprise him.

Aug. Forgive me, sir, I am so bewildered—so lost in

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wonder,—that I cannot think why you should wish to see me; and yet so strange an accident—

BEESW. Why? I tell you, to delight you. I know you can't guess—for I sent strict orders to Creamly—who you are to meet. Neither does the person, whom I shall send to you, dream who he is to find. 'Tis my whim. Enough; as I am determined to make you both happy, indulge me, and let me take my own way about it. Remain a minute—only stay a minute. I'll send one here who shall explain every thing. (*Aside.*) If, as I think, her heart be in her face, she's altogether a rare piece of heaven's work.—(*Exit.*)

AUG. He will send some one—he has heard my story—he will make both happy! Can it be so? If the hope—wild and visionary as it is—be realized? It is! he comes!—it is Edward!—(*Sinks into a chair.*)

Enter CLARENDON.

CLAR. He shuns me—will not speak to me—(*Seeing her.*) Augusta!

AUG. Clarendon!

CLAR. What miracle is this—what unhoped-for good, in this place to meet you? Now, let those who would condemn me, look here and read my best defence. Augusta, let me hope you came to seek me?

AUG. Your uncle wished me here; though, in truth, I did not come at his bidding.

CLAR. You have seen him?

AUG. Yes; did he not send you here?

CLAR. Even now I met him—wished to speak. He would not listen; but, with a motion of the hand, abruptly left me. But he has seen you—has spoken to you?

AUG. He told me he had heard my story—said he would surprise me—would send some one to me who loved me.

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CLAR. He saw me coming hither—knew we must meet. Did he say nothing more? Tell me,—every syllable. Did he give no promise?

AUG. He said he would make both happy—said, 'twas for such purpose he had wished to see me.

CLAR. A thousand blessings on him, the good, whimsical old man! He has but denied me to make this present joy more exquisite. Augusta, there is now no bar to our felicity: I have told all to the lady Margaret; and she, as I suspected, bears her loss with more than Amazonian strength. Nay, of this you shall be assured. Then again, dear Augusta (*kneeling*), I tender you a faith—

Enter LUBESKI.

AUG. My father!

CLAR. *He!* Your father?

LUB. Augusta, I should see my daughter.

AUG. And do, believe her—in all things—still your daughter. You shall know all, sir.

LUB. Let him speak. Now, sir. Or shall I begin the parley? You are a villain.—(*To* AUGUSTA.) Be you silent. Psha! I have seen brave, good men mown down like grass—have stood the din and hell of battle, and this in a mighty cause; since when, it is true, I am something older; though not so old that I should shake at the bold looks of a libertine, or so weak that I should need strength to chastize them.

CLAR. A libertine!

LUB. Young man, you owe a debt to the roof above you. This time, my passion has respected it.

CLAR. Hear me, sir!

LUB. You see here all that a merciless despotism has

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left me of wealth, power, and comfort: it is the only treasure saved from death and wrong.—You cannot possess it; do not make it worthless.

CLAR. By such doubts you wrong your daughter's honour.

LUB. I did not speak of her honour. Thirty years ago I loved the self-same mind she owns—a form, but that is little, such as before you. Hence, I know, you might as soon hope to sully a star in heaven, as think to dim her honour. I spoke of her happiness—and I warn you, fail not to respect it.

CLAR. My every feeling makes such warning a religion, for I love her.

LUB. Again? Take counsel, sir—do not tempt me,—pray, do not. 'Sdeath! What think you of my daughter—of me? You are here a pledged man: your troth is given to another; at the altar, within this hour, you are to plight that troth, and yet dare you, with the same breath, talk of love for her? You have spoken your last word in safety—taken your last look. Use wisdom; and, henceforth, to her be dumb, be blind. Augusta, I will see you home. (*Going.*)

CLAR. Then, sir, I speak to you. Passion, a noble though mistaken passion, absorbs your judgment—does me injury. When first I saw your daughter, she was happy in the gifts of wealth and station, I loved her—pray, sir, your patience—I loved her. But what was good and beautiful, ill fortune has in my thoughts, made almost sacred; and now, love is mixed with veneration.

LUB. Where—when—did you first meet? I spoke to her.

AUG. At Dresden, when you were—

LUB. Well, sir?

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CLAR. I had thought her lost, irrecoverably lost, when yesterday we met. I have acknowledged all to the lady Margaret, and she releases me from every bond. My uncle—

LUB. Refuses. I heard him.

CLAR. Me he refused; but, as it now appears, only to consent to your daughter. To her he has given his promise. Speak, Augusta; let her speak.

LUB. Did he consent to your marriage with this gentleman? What were his words?

AUG. They were,—that he had wished for me to make both happy.

LUB. And was there no one else to ask? When did your father die, Augusta?

AUG. Oh, sir, spare me now! All is such mystery; now, I cannot speak.

CLAR. Here comes my uncle.

LUB. Leave me with him.—(AUGUSTA *and* CLARENDON *retire.*) He has shewn me much kindness; still, I have some share in my daughter. Stay, let me not be sudden. Even now, he may come to break the matter to me.

Enter BEESWING.

BEESW. Well, master Matthew, hav'n't I surprised you?

LUB. In truth, I am somewhat surprised.

BEESW. When I'm determined to do a service, I never stop to take breath half-way. Ha! you are a happy father! Be robbed of every penny—be stripped of every thread, yet with such a daughter, you're richer than a king.

LUB. I have ever thought so. Thus, my friend, you must not think me wayward or forgetful, if I pause before I consent to lose her.

BEESW. Why should you lose her?

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LUB. When she marries,—

BEESW. Why, the marriage of a loved child may, I own, seem to a parent a kind of death. Yet therein a father pays but a just debt. Wedlock gave him the good gift; to wedlock then he owes it. Now, your Augusta I am sure, deserves a noble husband.

LUB. When she was yet in the blossom of life, in the prodigality of a father's hopes, I promised from her womanhood a store of goodness. With honour can I say it, hope has been outdone by the fulness of reality.

BEESW. See, now, the difference of our lots.—You are a rich father, and I am a poor childless bachelor. You in your autumn, have golden fruit,—I, little but dry chaff. 'Tis this determines me to fit Ned with a wife. For I have studied the matter, and am sure of it; they who live single all their life, when they have sown their wild oats, begin to sow nettles; whilst the married, from the first, plant orchards. I know, you are too wise to stand between your child and the wishes of her heart?

LUB. I will not hesitate. I consent to her marriage.

BEESW. What then, she has told you she has already chosen a husband?

LUB. Such communication has been made to me; though I own somewhat abruptly. I will confess, I think there might have been a little more ceremony.

BEESW. But so it is; when young folks are for going to church, they never heed whether in a slow march or a gallop. Then, you'll let the girl marry?

LUB. Be you a witness. Augusta. (AUGUSTA *comes down*—CLARENDON *following her.*) I should have known of this; but I will not chide you. No, Augusta; I will rather think it was your love to hide from me a passion, which

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could not seem but hopeless. Your devotion, your filial goodness, is rewarded. With a deep and earnest prayer for your felicity, I give you to the man of your choice—I give you to your husband. (*About to join their hands*).

Beesw. What! husband! my nephew? What play are you playing now? Marry my nephew! What juggle is this?

Clar. Dear sir, you surely have not trifled? No—it is impossible. Did you not expressly send for his lady, to——

Beesw. To be sure,—I own it. I sent for her to meet her father, not to marry you.

Lub. Augusta, I am humiliated, and by your imprudence. That my child—speak; did you not interpret the words of this gentleman as a consent to your union with his nephew?

Aug. I could not think to see you here—I could not think he spoke of my father. I have been rash—unhappy,—a victim to the strangest events. Let us begone, sir; father, pray come: I will disclose all, but let us quit this house.

Beesw. (*To* Clarendon.) This, then, is the young lady you met abroad?—To be sure; I see the plan. I was to be tricked into the match: the father, too, was to play a part in the farce.

Lub. Augusta, you hear to what you have reduced me?

Beesw. Twas no wonder you argued so well as counsel, when your son-in-law elect was your client!

Lub. Mr. Beeswing—No, in the belief that time will clear me—I will not now attempt defence. But, sir, I beseech you think not so meanly of me. I am the greatest villain if I knew one tittle of what accident has so strangly shewn to-day.

Beesw. Accident! No, sir; I was to be the gull, the

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old dupe: 'twas a deep scheme to come into my service as clerk——

AUG. Clerk! father?—

BEESW. To wheedle my confidence—to profit by my weakness: but you have lost your pains. (*Rings bell. Enter* SERVANT.) Tell lady Aubrey to hasten the bride; we are ready for the ceremony. I'll have no delay, though the scullion be bridesmaid. (LUBESKI *and* AUGUSTA *are going.*)

CLAR. Stay, Augusta. (*To* BEESWING.) Sir, might I pay the deep debt I owe you with my life, I'd lay it down with gladness. But you cannot ask the sacrifice of a life's peace. My love was first pledged to this lady.

BEESW. Then, take her; and with her, take—Psha! I'll not waste my anger on such a butterfly. Take your wife, and leave my sight: leave the lady Margaret and leave my fortune. Now, strike a beggar's match; now, father-in-law, join them.

LUB. Augusta, shall I do so? My hand is ready.

AUG. I had rather your hand should close my eyes than now it should join our hands.

CLAR. Augusta!

LUB. (*Aside.*) My own daughter!

BEESW. You refuse him—you will not have him—you mean this?

AUG. Truly, solemnly. (*To* BEESWING.) I vow to you, sir, never to receive the hand of this gentleman, unless—my father, too, consenting—at your hand. This I vow, and as I keep my oath—

CLAR. Augusta!

AUG. May I be judged. (*To* BEESWING.) You will find, sir, you have wronged your clerk. Now, father, let us not stay.

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CLAR. Augusta, yet a word—

LUB. Not a syllable: you have heard her.—Before, *I* gave you warning; now, you have heard my daughter.

Enter LADY AUBREY.

BEESW. Quick, my lady; we have no time. (*To* LUBESKI.) For the present, sir, farewell. If I find I have misunderstood you, I shall be rejoiced to own it. And I allow, your daughter here,—

LADY A. His daughter! The milliner his daughter?

BEESW. }
LUB. } Milliner!
CLAR. }

LADY A. What wonder is this? I say, milliner. She brought home the wedding-gown. I vow, there it is! Margaret not yet drest!

LUB. Milliner! you blush. Augusta, what have I to learn? Again you redden; speak!

AUG. I will tell you all; but, spare me, not here.

LUB. Here! Sir, (*To* BEESWING) did you not bid her come to this house?

BEESW. I sent to Creamly to bring her here. I thought she came on the invitation. But all is such a maze, I'll answer for nothing.

LUB. Augusta, answer you. Explain every circumstance. Milliner!

AUG. It is true, sir, but forgive me. You knew it not; but for many days, I had parted with the last shilling of our means. Then, I sought employment; found it with a kind person I watched from Mr. Creamly's. I was employed where this lady and the lady Margaret saw me. They bade me wait here for their commands—I came; and

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let that, the wedding-gown of the bride to-day, the work of these hands, attest the truth the plainness of my purpose.

CLAR. (*Aside.*) It is the very raiment. Divine Augusta!

LUB. My dear, dear child! (*To* BEESWING.) Sir, are you satisfied?

BEESW. No; I am ashamed—ashamed of my mean suspicions. Your child is the queen of women; (*aside to him.*) but take her away, lest her virtue should persuade me to injustice.

CLAR. For the last time I tell you, sir, I will not endure the thraldom you prepare me. Though to this I were promised by a thousand oaths, I want the strength to observe them.

LUB. With the leave of these your friends, my daughter may instruct you.—(*Having whispered to* BEESWING.) Augusta, the lady Margaret has not yet a bridesmaid. Will you perform the office?

AUG. Father,—I—will.

BEESW. Now, sir, you are shewn your duty by an angel: will you meanly shrink from it?

MARGARET *is brought from room by Lady* AUBREY.

LADY A. Margaret, we wait for you: his lordship is wheeled into the saloon; the chaplain is ready, and yet you are not drest. Is this your care on your wedding-day? Come, then, I will assist you. (*Takes her hand.*) Come; why, what is this—your wedding-ring!

MARG. (*Screaming and hiding her hand.*) Ha! I forgot to take it off!

LADY A. Never mind; be calm—take it off now. In a few minutes, your husband will return it to its place. Why, what is the matter—why will you not take it off?

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Enter EFFINGHAM *from room.*

EFF. Because her husband has already placed it on her hand, and now commands her that she keeps it there.

All. Husband!

CLAR. Again—again! her husband?

EFF. Her husband, since this morning.

BEESW. More wonders! (*To* MARGARET.) It seems, then, you didn't love my nephew?

MARG. Yes, sir, I did; loved him so well, I always wished he was my brother.

LADY A. Girl, your disobedience will kill your father.

BEESW. For once, I rejoice at disobedience.

LADY A. Indeed, sir! Then let me rejoice that my niece has at least married a gentleman; a man of ancient family and noble blood.

BEESW. Well, I'm certainly of ancient family, and of a sort of noble blood.

LADY A. Truly?

BEESW. Truly. At nine years old, I was turned out of the poor-house to clean shoes, sprinkle a shop, and run with messages. I am now sixty-three; I have the fortune of a prince; and not a penny of it soiled by a dirty bargain. No man owes me an injury, I owe no man a shilling. Now, if that isn't a good sort of nobility, why 'tis only to be had from the heralds. Then for antiquity of family: allowing the lion in your coat of arms was painted from the lion in Noah's ark; what of it?—wasn't the founder of my family one of the passengers? I respect his lordship for what he was born; only let him respect me, for what I have made myself. The act of his daughter shall peril no part of his estates: our bargain shall yet hold. Here (*taking papers from his pocket,*) are the bonds and mortgages;—his lord-

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ship was to receive them after the ceremony.—(*Tears them.*) Oblige me, and give the pieces to him with my compliments.

Enter SERVANT.

SERV. His lordship commands me to say, that every thing is prepared.

BEES. (*To* LUBESKI.) First, my friend, your hand and forgiveness. And now, a word: 'tis pity that the favours should remain on hand? The chaplain, too, mus'n't lose his present. What say you? All bars now put aside, shall the young folks marry? You consent? (LUBESKI *bows: to* AUGUSTA.) You hear, your father consents. (*Joins the hands of* AUGUSTA *and* CLARENDON.) Be happy, and be sure that I, that all must rejoice, that after so many crosses, so many trials, it was for herself Augusta made—THE WEDDING GOWN.

CURTAIN.

BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON,
JOHNSONS'-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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4

THE KING'S FOOL;

OR,

THE OLD MAN'S CURSE.

AN HISTORIC PLAY,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY

J. G. MILLINGEN, M.D.

AUTHOR OF

"THE BEE HIVE," "LADIES AT HOME," "SPRING AND AUTUMN."
"THE ILLUSTRIOUS STRANGER," "LOVE LAUGHS AT BAILIFFS."

THE MUSIC

BY MM. NATHAN AND WADE.

LONDON:
JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.
(*Agent to the Dramatic Authors' Society.*)

1833.

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LONDON:
BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON, JOHNSON'S-COURT,
FLEET-STREET.

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PREFACE.

THE following piece is founded on the same traditional subject as *Le Roi s'amuse* of Victor Hugo. The chief incidents have been retained, but the plot and characters differ materially. Urged by that anti-regal mania which distinguishes the republic of letters of our ingenious neighbours, the French author represented Francis I. as a base and profligate prince. I have endeavoured to delineate him in the colouring transmitted by his chroniclers;—a lively, amiable monarch, launched, it is true, on the giddy vortex of a depraved court, yet still high-minded and chivalric in his disposition, and according to the acceptation of the word *honour*, then, and unfortunately now in high life, honourable in illicit pursuits when condescending to ennoble plebeian blood. In the Parisian piece, with heartless levity, he ruins the child of his miserable jester, while she is represented an infatuated being, glorying in her royal degradation, and ready to lay down her life to save that of her despoiler, even when endangered in a house of ill-fame, and faithless in the arms of a prostitute, exclaiming—

> "Puisqu'il ne m'aime plus, je n'ai plus qu'à mourir,
> Eh bien! mourons pour lui."

Still the animal strength of the pangs of death assail her, and she says, after hearing the assassin whetting his knife on a scythe,—

> "Ciel! il va me faire bien du mal!!"

Hugo's Blanche in short, is a deluded silly girl, creating neither pity nor esteem, while the public has appeared to take a warm interest in the miseries of my virtuous but ill-fated heroine.

Availing myself of the licence of romance, I have ventured to make somewhat free with history, and to produce a better dramatic

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situation, I have made St. Valièr Diana's husband instead of her father. The death of the Dauphin, supposed at the time to have been poisoned, was an event posterior to the conspiracy in which St. Valièr was involved, but I have had recourse to this anachronism to heighten the effect of the catastrophe. For although the old man's denunciations were sadly realised by the miserable circumstance that attended Francis's death, as related by historians, it occurred to me that his malediction, falling doubly on the principal and the accessory in his wife's disgrace, was a desirable evidence of retributive justice.

It would be no easy task to express my thanks to the performers; the applause of the public must have been to them more grateful than any tribute I can pay them. Mr. Warde's acting has been justly considered by the press a masterpiece of the histrionic art: I was much indebted to him for various suggestions during the rehearsal. Mr. Abbott acted the merry, light-hearted Monarch to the life. To Miss Jarman, who undertook a part far beneath her abilities, I feel personally obliged: her simplicity and single-heartedness in the humble yet proud Blanch, elicited tears even from the gallery. When asked by Francis if her father was not deformed, the manner of her filial reply—

"The world, my liege, might say he is,"

produced an electric effect; fully proving that our humble classes are still alive to nature's simple language.

I can only request all the performers to accept my best thanks and good wishes for their future prosperity. I should be wanting in justice, were I not publicly to acknowledge the liberality and activity of the management in producing the play in the splendid manner in which it was brought out.

J. G. MILLINGEN.

London, August 1st, 1833.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Francis the First, King of France .... MR. ABBOTT.
Count de St. Vallier, an aged Nobleman MR. EGERTON.
Chabannes, Lord in Attendance ..... MR. WOOD.
Triboulet, the King's Fool ..... MR. WARDE.
Pardaillan, *De Bercy* } Officers of the Court ..
Cherubin, a favourite Page ..... MISS P. HORTON.
Melchior, a Bohemian Bandit .....
Rodolph, *Zeppo* } Two Bohemians .....

WOMEN.

Diana of Poictiers..... MISS SIDNEY.
Blanch .....MISS JARMAN.
Zerlina ..... MISS HORTON.
Dame Perrette ..... MRS. GARRICK.
Gertrude..... MISS SOMERVILLE.

Lords and Ladies of the Court, Guards, Pages, &c.

SCENE—*Paris.*

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THE KING'S FOOL;

OR,

THE OLD MAN'S CURSE.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

A Landscape—Pleasure Grounds—To the right Count de Saint Vallier's Castle, with practicable drawbridge—day-breaking.

(FRANCIS I. *and* TRIBOULET, *enveloped in ample cloaks, are discovered under the windows of Diana de Poictiers, with a band of Minstrels.*)

SERENADE. (WADE.)

Lady, hear the song of morn
  Floating on the passing gale,
Dew-drops glisten on the thorn,
  Sunbeams gild the waving vale.
Let Dark dreams then flit away,
Wake and greet the blushing day.

Music sounds o'er dell and brake
Feather'd songsters throng the grove.
All around you sings—awake!
'Wake to happiness and love.

(Exeunt Minstrels.

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FRAN. Well, good Triboulet, dost think the beauteous Diana of Poictiers will consent to be mine?

TRIB. By my bauble, if rivers flow towards the sea, and the mind of woman ever flows against wind, tide and current, e'er yon rising sun set o'er the Louvre turrets, she will be book'd by your most gracious majesty in the journal of your conquests—her present captivity will make her pant for freedom; for instead of immuring her in that castle, had her silly old husband the Count, known woman's mind, if he had wished her to be a domestic wife, he should have thrown doors and drawbridge open, and told her—"Madam, go wherever it suits your fancy."

FRAN. Instead of which, no doubt, he amuses her with weeping love, and jealous sighs——

TRIB. That would drown, or puff out even a farthing rushlight of love.

FRAN. And I cannot but admire the sagacity of the old gentleman, who, to bring her away from the busy allurements of the capital—that scarcely give a fair lady time to think—leads her to this romantic abode, where every grove breathes tender passion, and fans the glow of youth; where each bower beckons to soft repose in its mystic shades; and the very moon with her chorist the nightingale, pander to bland seduction and a melting mood.

TRIB. The reason, no doubt, why prudent dames bring their fair daughters to town during the expansive days of spring; knowing, perhaps, from experience the danger that encompasses sylvan simplicity and rural in—no—cence.

FRAN. Poor Diana! Even did I not admire those charms, that rank her first on beauty's list—the odious thraldrom under which she mourns, would induce me to rescue her from oppression.

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TRIB. This day my liege her husband goes to your majesty's court; and the coast once clear, I bet my fool's cap against his coronet—that there being a woman in the case—folly will bear the bell.

FRAN. And what shall be thy reward good gossip?

TRIB. The pleasure of seeing others as miserable as myself.

FRAN. I am not so ambitious; and the pleasure of pleasing is the only lot I covet. (*Exit.*)

TRIB. Now to commence my campaign; stratagem shall open these gates, while vanity unbolts the citadel of its fair inmates's heart. (*laughing bitterly*) Ha! ha! ha!—Count De St. Vallier! You have often spurned me—trampled me under your noble feet—and why?—I was a base plebeian, a low-born wretch—the child of nobody—deformed—misshapen—butt of the rabble—jest of the nobility—the king's fool! Ha! ha! ha! I am paid to make him laugh; but I feel not my degradation when I can make others weep—with this bauble I rule the greatest monarch in the world; his very ministers are swayed by folly—I draw my royal master in my mesh like the wily spider—my bait—the decoy duck of destruction—woman! who, like the flowing goblet, will e'er attract its votaries, though poison lurketh in the bowl—woman! I hate you!—as much as your vain pride scorns the poor Triboulet (*paces up and down contemplating his deformity*) why was I thus created?—decrepid—a blot upon the beauteous face of nature—a helpless wretch? but no; I am not helpless; I can do mischief—aye and bitterly—I feel that I am sent on earth upon an infernal mission—the genius of evil—mankind that spurns me, is my natural foe; I wage against the fallen race, a war implacable—one only being in this detested world, still binds me to it; she and she alone I fondly love; if Heaven ere had ought to

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do with me—may Heaven protect and bless her. (*Bugle in the castle.*) They come—now, hate and vengeance inspire me and give to my willing tongue the fascination of the serpent, with an aspic's sting. (*Exit cautiously. The drawbridge is let down and enter—two servants,* COUNT DE St. VALLIER, DIANA, HUBERT, *two servants, and two men with crossbows, who remain on drawbridge.*)

COUNT. I must to court, my love; prithee in my short absence let all my injunctions be attended to.

DIANA. My bounden duty, my lord, is, no doubt, obedience; indeed, resistance would be vain; but yet my lord, tho' yonder ponderous gates may check my footsteps' freedom, a woman's spirit, let me tell you, is of an aerial nature that power can ne'er confine; nought, sir, was ever known to shackle us but affection; indignant, we will boldly take our flight upon an eagle's wing to look defiance in the very sun; or, in gentleness seek with the timid dove a refuge in the shade.

COUNT. Believe me, Diana, prudence renders retirement expedient.

DIANA. Then sir, retirement must be our choice; if not, a splendid notoriety may chance to mark revenge.

COUNT. You know not dearest, the corruption of the times.

DIANA. Yet I am told, my lord, they ever truly were, what now they are, and probably will be; I should much like forsooth to learn in all your musty books, the purity of the golden age; when princes fed on acorns and goat's milk; and sovereign's daughters churned butter, and scoured in the royal laundry: it was, no doubt, my lord in those virtuous and sainted times, when swallows (as nurses tell their all believing brats) built nests in old men's beards, ha! ha! ha!

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COUNT. Thou little knowest the profligacy of Francis and his corrupted minions; nothing is held sacred by their unruly passions; and to disturb domestic peace, is both their pride and glory.

DIANA. Did I desire, sir, to be brought from my fair Poitou to this gay capital; to be immured a prisoner within the very precincts of a far-famed court? Lone and moping in my prison, the sound of minstrelsy, the shouts of carousal and merry festivals must ever and anon reach my all listening ear; I am frank my lord, I long to see the court to which my birth and rank now call me, if danger lurketh there, then let me proudly boast of having dared it.

COUNT. Our holidame forbid it; the look of Francis possesses the fascinating power of the serpent.

DIANA. Heigho! then he must be a very terrible man; but hark ye my lord, I have often heard old and experienced warriors tell bragadocio captains of peaceful times, a fort cannot be deemed impregnable until it has withstood a bold attack; and I must confess, sir, that were I one of your lords of the creation, instead of a poor simple creature, I should place little confidence in the security of woman's heart, unless it had been assailed.

COUNT. Assailed!

DIANA. Aye, sir, assailed—sword in hand, by ladder and by breach—by gay and gallant cavaliers.

COUNT. You talk Diana like a silly and forward child.

DIANA. I also have heard the same veterans say, the perils of the field teach the young soldiers prudence and discretion; but that the giddy recruit is apt to fall in wily and well-laid ambuscades; you my lord, are both a soldier and a statesman. (*Bantering.*) I therefore, with all humility, submit these suggestions to your better judgement—in the mean time,

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order your trusty warder Hubert to lower the portcullis—arm every loop-hole—load every gun to the very muzzle—prepare fire-pots—rockets—blue lights and catamarans—grind every sword, and sharpen every lance. While the flood gates of security inundate your castle's ditches, to defend poor little I against assault and battery, blockade, investment, or bombardment, ha! ha! ha! (*Exit over draw-bridge.*)

COUNT. Alas! this flippant language savours too much of the licentious court, I fear my apprehensions are but too well founded—Hubert.

HUBERT. My lord.

COUNT. Thou hast heard this silly woman; in my absence I hold thee responsible that no one enters the castle gate.

HUBERT. You shall be obeyed my lord; yet recollect in spite of all vigilance, the sceptre of a monarch is a magic wand that openeth every door.

COUNT. The world at any rate shall not condemn me for delivering up the keys; however, such caution Hubert will not long be wanted; learn that this very night shall seal the tyrant's doom; a host of my noble friends, neglected and degraded by this profligate monarch, have sworn by the love they bear their country and their peaceful hearths—hourly endangered by his wild excesses—to hurl him from the throne he thus ignobly fills.

HUBERT. It ill becomes a man of my humble degree to offer unask'd advice; yet in the name of all you hold dear, my lord, beware how you enter upon this fearful project; whatever may be the faults of Francis—and they no doubt are many—yet still he is beloved.

COUNT. By none but the corrupt.

HUBERT. Alas! my lord! his enemies then, must be but few.

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COUNT. Then shall we perish, sooner than with craven dread submit to his accursed power—dost know the chaste, the pure Diana has not escaped his all-devouring eye, did'st thou not hear but awhile ago, a troop of his licentious min_ strels, pour forth under her very casement, their blasting notes of love?

HUBERT. Perhaps my lord some wandering troubadours.

COUNT. No Hubert, I recognized among them the king himself, with Triboulet his jester; the base agent of his infamous designs, (*Officer without,* This way.) and as I live my guards have seized the caitiff. (*Enter officer, bringing in* TRIBOULET *and two guards.*)

OFFICER. My lord we have seized this knave in the very act of scaling the postern palisades.

COUNT. (*Aside to* HUBERT.) Art thou now convinced? (*To* TRIBOULET.) And thou demon! imp of hell! what brought thee here? answer as thou valuest thy vile existence.

TRIB. (*Bantering.*) To pay my obeisance to your lordship, and the beautiful Diana of Poictiers, to congratulate you both on the birth of a son and heir to your estate and beauty; offer my humble services, drink a cup of caudle, and rattle my bauble to amuse the pretty babe.

COUNT. Full well thou knowest Vampire, my union with the fair Diana has not been blessed with a wished-for heir. The monster banters me; no equivocation—this instant tell me what were thy orders, and thy base plans in thus stealing into my dwelling.

TRIB. Stealing?—my lord, I never stole anything, save a march upon my neighbours; but, since your lordship must know all, I humbly come to crave your lordship's permission to get married. I wish to imitate my betters;

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and though I am only fifty-five, come next Lammas-Day, I am about wedding a pretty maiden of fourteen next Michaelmas. Ha! ha! ha!

COUNT. The scoundrel's insolence is intolerable!

TRIB. And my gracious sovereign, who admires all his fair subjects, patronizes my wedding. He wishes every one to be joyful; and his usual toast is—"May the married be single, and the single be happy!" Oh! I beg your lordship's pardon—but I put the cart before the horse!

COUNT. I can no longer brook his insulting gibes. Seize the reptile, and scourge him into silence!

(*Guards seize* TRIB.)

TRIB. Flog away! Flog away, my lord! Perhaps you 'll get me whipped into a seemly shape! But one word to your lordship. (*with bitterness.*) You are fond of playing at cards, Sir Count—I 'll be your partner—your trumps are now clubs—mine shall be hearts—aye, and bleeding ones, sir. Now, my merry men, flog away!

(*Guards exeunt with him over the bridge.*)

COUNT. Can daring insolence be pursued beyond that wretch's? The base views of Francis are now obvious: I haste to court, to meet my secret friends: let not a living being approach Diana, save the holy Friar who directs her; and let not even him come near, unless he shows the signet that I gave him.

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SCENE II.

A festive Hall in the Louvre.—FRANCIS *and his Court discovered at a splendid Banquet.—To the following Chorus the Lords at Table drink the Ladies' Health.*

CHORUS.

Pass the drink divine—
  Pledge your ladies' eyes;
See the sparkling wine
  With their blushes vies!
Then, Love, all hail! And banish fear—
  Lethean draughts we 'll sip;
While kisses check the trembling tear,
  And chide the pouting lip.

FRAN. And now Cherubin, my gentle mignon, sing me that song of thine, which often nerved my arm in battle, as the breeze, struggling with oppressive smoke, wafted my scarf to fan my burning brow, and reminded me of the delicious hands that wove the proud distinction.

CHER. Which of your scarfs, my liege? for in every battle I have seen you change them, although the damsels, who wore out their fingers to work these *proud distinctions*, fancied, poor silly thimble-drivers, they had secured your majesty with what they thought a true-lover's knot. Alas! it was a Gordian tie that you too well could sever!

FRAN. Well said, my merry page; and could I venture on a pun, like my good gossip, poet Marot, I should say, did thy attraction, pretty page, grow with thy growth (I can only regret thou hast no sister like thee), I should strongly recommend every prudent maid, wife, or widow, to pluck thee from her album.

CHER. Therefore, like you, my liege, I wish not to be bound.

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SONG. (NATHAN.)

The spur of the soldier is beauty—
To glory her image will guide;
He feels a delight in his duty
When he thinks on the maid of his pride!

With ardour he rushes to battle,
And draws the bright steel from his side;
It beams, 'midst the smoke and the rattle,
The star of his hope and his pride!

No, never that sword can be broken;
On its strength will the warrior confide;
And the foe learnt that it was a token—
The last gift of the maid of his pride.

(*After the song, the king comes down the stage, in confidential discourse with* CHABANNES.)

CHAB. What, verily and truly in love, my liege?—a sleepless, hopeless passion?

FRAN. It is but too true.

CHAB. I hear your majesty has deigned to cast a favourable eye on the beauteous Diana.

FRAN. That will be a mere courtly aristocratic amour. I am ashamed to confess it, but I do now experience a sentiment of admiration—pure and unmingled with vanity's attraction, for a damsel of humble rank and mean degree, the most beauteous creature in my dominions. I first beheld her in one of my incognito visits at our Lady's shrine, and have since traced her to a wretched hovel hard by the palace.

CHAB. To which, no doubt, you shortly will transfer her.

FRAN. Not so; the contrast of her timid looks with countenances breathing conquest, that I daily see, led me to wish success might be the triumph of love, and not of power. In the garb of a humble student have I followed

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her; but she is constantly attended by an old haridan, whom I should like to burn for the welfare of her soul. Not a single word have I been able to exchange; yet her downcast looks, and suppressed sighs, lead me to hope for a fond return.

CHAB. Have you set the knave Triboulet at her?

FRAN. For the first time in his life, I believe, the fellow has missed scent. Nay, when I spoke of her, he appeared uneasy and perplexed; therefore, Chabannes, to thy discretion and ability do I entrust this adventure. All that I have hitherto discovered is, that at nightfall a man, wrapped in a large mantle, steals cautiously into the house, after having ascertained the coast is clear.

CHAB. No doubt some troublesome father, brother, or protector. We'll strangle him in his cloak, with which we'll hoodwink the damsel, and bear her to your majesty.

FRAN. No, no—no violence: track her out, and leave the rest to bounteous nature—our silver tongue, and our good patron St. Francis (*takes off his cap*), who ever protects me in my need.

CHAB. Then your majesty is sure of success. Mercury never took wing to serve the master of the gods more promptly than shall your faithful servant in obeying your commands.

FRAN. Jupiter, I fancy, had no body-guards; but a company of mine await thee, if success crown thy endeavours. But I do not see our trusty and well-beloved Count De St. Vallier at court.

CHAB. Probably he is consulting with a blacksmith, for locks and bars to secure his young wife.

DE BER. Or some professor of the black art, to know under what sign he was born.

CHER. Of all the zodiac, Capricorn seems his greatest dread.

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CHAR. The old gentleman is superstitious; for I hear he apprehends your majesty can cast an evil eye.

CHER. Or rather, like Cæsar, your majesty has nothing to do but look and conquer.

FRAN. But here he comes—seemingly in a gloomy mood.

CHAR. And he will no doubt, as usual, preach us a sermon on pretty behaviour.

Enter COUNT *and suite.*

FRAN. Though late, yet welcome, Count: but still alone? Why does not the fair Diana grace our circle?

COUNT. Reared in rural solitude, she is but badly calculated, my liege, to move in a court, where nought but present pleasure is attended to, and futurity unheeded and defied.

FRAN. The business of each day and night, Sir Count, is sufficient occupation for a reasonable man; yet methinks, sir, no noble dame has met with aught but high respect when in our presence.

COUNT. What can wives expect, when your majesty's tried and faithful servants, high both in birth and rank, are subject to hourly insult?

FRAN. I understand you not.

COUNT. But just now, my liege, your favourite jester has presumed so far to forget his insignificance as to merit at my hands a well-earned castigation.

FRAN. (*Angrily.*) What, Sir Count, have you dared to punish my Triboulet?

COUNT. I merely did justice in your royal name, sire.

Enter TRIBOULET.

FRAN. (*Aside.*) By St. Francis, he shall rue the deed! Come hither, honest Triboulet. (TRIBOULET *comes down.*) I learn Count De St. Vallier has dared to lay hands on our livery.

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TRIB. He has done worse, my liege; he has laid them on our hump.

FRAN. Then thou shalt have, my good gossip, whatever satisfaction thou demandest for thy injury.

COUNT. Satisfaction, King Francis, to that miserable wretch! My services to the state, are few, sire; but I did not think they were thus far forgotten! And to this court you would wish me to bring my innocent Diana, 'midst parasites and hireling sycophants! (*General murmur.*)

FRAN. We are always ready to hear your homilies, Sir Count.

COUNT. I remember, sire, the day when your ancestor's throne was supported by the noble and the brave; when honoured chivalry was the boasted lustre of the court; and the bright armour of your tried and faithful followers shone in prouder array than the gorgeous trappings of courtezans and motley jesters.

FRAN. I must confess, good Count, that in these blessed days of peace, I 'd rather be surrounded by damsels' distaffs than soldiers' spears.

TRIB. Henceforth, my liege, I would propose that your noble court should go to bed in cuirasses; hand ladies to dance with an iron gauntlet; dine in helmets; and make love with their visors down!

COUNT. (*Not heeding* TRIBOULET.) Women and their distaffs, my liege, may have attraction; but seek them not among the wives and daughters of your faithful servants.

TRIB. I fully coincide in opinion with the noble lord; and, for the furtherance of the security of the noble ladies, I shall move, as an amendment, that it be enacted, no young lady shall marry an impertinent suitor under the age of sixty; (*All laugh.*) that grey hairs, or a bald head, be in-

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dispensable qualifications for a marriage-license; that no dame, or damsel be permitted to dance with any partner but her husband, her brother, or her grandfather (*laugh,*) and that no doctor be allowed to attend them unveiled, unless he be three score, and blind—at least of one eye (*laugh.*)

CHAB. I move that married ladies shall be obliged to walk out in blinkers.

DE BER. And I, that all ladies' male attendants be selected among the invalids of your Majesty's armies.

CHERUBIN. That all your Majesty's pages and officers wear green spectacles, or a patch on the eye.

TRIB. And moreover that the honourable Count de St. Vallier be appointed lord of every bed chamber and keeper of the ladies back stairs (*all laugh.*)

COUNT. 'Tis well my liege; this banishment from your Majesty's presence I gratefully accept; nay hail my disgrace as a harbinger of better days; may your jesters prop your throne in the hour of need. (*Exit, followed by his servants.*)

CHAB. Ha! ha! ha! old Nostradamus is furious.

TRIB. Your Majesty—(*King comes down—courtiers group at back.*) Your Majesty promised me satisfaction.

FRAN. Methinks your gibes have amply obtain'd it.

TRIB. Not quite my liege; my lacerated back is not yet healed: may it please your Majesty—who is more ambitious than a king?

FRAN. His ministers.

TRIB. You are out:—again.

FRAN. His confessor.

TRIB. You are in—the priory of St. Vallery is vacated by the death of the incumbent, who breathed his last by the visitation of a truffled turkey.

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FRAN. Well.

TRIB. I want it my liege.

FRAN. What! Triboulet turn friar?

TRIB. Not yet; I have other fish to fry—the priory of St. Vallery please your Majesty.

FRAN. Once more—for whom?

TRIB. (*Bitterly.*) For Diana of Poictiers.

FRAN. Ha! Say you so?—the priory is thine.

TRIB. My power to demand it.

FRAN. This signature (*Giving tablets in which he had written.*)

TRIB. This royal token and endowment will procure me her confessor's signet and an entrance to the castle; and then—Diana's yours—and Triboulet's revenged.

(FRANCIS *and Court retire up the stage—a Ballet is performed on which the scene closes.*)

SCENE III.

(*A Chamber in the Count's Castle.*)

Enter DIANA *with Bird in a cage.*

DIANA. Come, my poor fellow prisoner—often do I wish to restore thee to thy liberty; but my good lord tells me, the wild birds would destroy thee as voraciously as the king and his courtiers would devour me, were I let loose; Heigho! how I long for my native groves.

SONG, (NATHAN.)

A pretty bird was moping in its golden cage,
While wanton linnets warbled in the green boughs round,
Their merry chirrups could not his sad grief assuage,
In vain he tried to join in every cheerful sound.

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Pretty linnet teach me, Those notes so sweet
Teach me I beseech thee I daily greet,
But ne'er can imitate.
Sad fate!
But ne'er can imitate.

A friendly linnet perched upon its splendid dome,
And said, dear bird, I wish you roved the grove with me,
Then you and I in verdant fields would fondly roam;
No bird can sing in raptures till it's song be free.
Would that I could teach thee, Those notes thus free,
Reach thee sweet to teach thee. So full of glee.
That slaves can't imitate,
Sad fate!
That slaves can't imitate.

Enter GERTRUDE.

GER. My lady, a holy Franciscan friar wishes to see your ladyship; he was at first refused admittance by the warder, but on his presenting the Count's signet, the bridge was lowered; oh, by the blessed and most patient eleven thousand virgins! He is the ugliest man my two eyes ever beheld; and sure I am I should never be a sinner if sin was half so frightful.

DIANA. (*Aside.*) Some fresh precaution, no doubt, of my amiable husband; at any rate, shew him in—any thing for a little variety.

GER. That's exactly what I said, dear lady, when the blessed Saint Zenobia, who was fried on a griddle for her virtue, promised me in a dream two husbands; and I hope she'll keep her promise when I'm awake. (*Exit.*)

DIANA. I am certain this new monk, whoever he may be, cannot be more odious than my spiritual director, father Gregory, who so often couples love with sin, and marriage with obedience, that the one seems as enticing as the other is forbidding; but here is the new comer; well, the Count

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must have ransacked all the monasteries in the kingdom to find such a fright.

Enter TRIBOULET *as a Franciscan friar.*

TRIB. Peace be with you my sister.

DIANA. A vastly pretty brother truly; peace, good friar! I am *too* peaceful in this gloomy castle; give me a siege—a storm—any thing is better than telling beads, and counting hours; but prithee, holy man, what brings *you* here instead of father Gregory?

TRIB. It has pleased our gracious sovereign to create my worthy brother prior of Saint Vallery; yes lady, to that distinguished station he has been translated for his virtues.

DIANA. I wish he had been translated to me for my sins, for I never could understand one word he said, when ringing the changes in my ear, about connubial duties and nuptial ties, and matrimonial obligations and abnegations—and the lord knows what, that deafened me like the great bell of Notre Dame.

TRIB. I trust, madam, that in me you will find a less severe director; for if obliged at times to enjoin spiritual penance I shall not lose sight of some more worldly compensations.

DIANA. (*Aside.*) Oh dear! he is just the man I wanted—I declare he is not half so ugly as I thought him; and pray good friar what is your name?

TRIB. Barnaby, at your ladyship's commands; an unworFranciscan, and confessor to his most Christian majesty, Francis the First.

DIANA. Confessor to the king! then indeed father Barnaby you have no sinecure I should think; or you must be a very indulgent comforter; and pray what penances do you enjoin to his Majesty?

TRIB. Madam I confess according to what I call the new

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lights; that is to say, I make darkness more visible; too much severity hardens the heart; no man or woman can be perfect; and when I listen to the avowal of transgression I split the difference, between sin and punishment.

DIANA. Explain.

TRIB. Suppose, for instance your ladyship, or his majesty had sinned six times during the week, I should lay a solemn injunction on you not to sin above three times the next one; nay, I might even be a little more indulgent, and supposing you had sinned seven times, as I cannot halve the number without the fraction of half a sin, I strike a balance in your favour, and allow you four.

DIANA. Ha! ha! ha! well, this is the most convenient director I ever heard of; but tell me good Barnaby—I should think the king is more likely to sin forty times than four.

TRIB. Royalty has prerogatives fair lady; but my noble master is most sadly calumniated by the wicked world; true, he may be a little fickle in his admirations; faithless in his vows of everlasting love; but this arises from his having only seen the false and the perfidious that crowd the court. Oh, St. Francis! had he but known your ladyship —your real—your sterling merits would soon have recalled him from the paths of folly in which it grieves me to see him stray; he never hears of your beauty without emotion; or of your virtues without admiration—could you suspect a frank and open countenance like his to harbour deceit,

DIANA. I never beheld him.

TRIB. What! never saw your sovereign, of whose court you should have been the brightest ornament?

DIANA. It was never permitted me.

TRIB. Then allow me to shew you his portrait. (*Gives the portrait.*)

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DIANA. Dear me! what handsome features! and is this like him!

TRIB. No, madam; art cannot do justice to his noble looks.

DIANA. How I should like to see him.

TRIB. You have my permission; I am sent hither to direct your steps in the proper path; behold this signet given me by your husband himself! holy father Barnaby, said he—for he well knows my sainted reputation—holy father Barnaby said he, I have been unjust and barbarous to the beauteous Diana! now I have discovered the absurdity of my fears; I leave her entirely to your directions; then fairest lady let me commence my instructions by putting your virtues to the test, and bringing you into the presence of the king.

DIANA. Oh! I dare not.

TRIB. That is a bad sign of your fortitude; well then, I shall lead you to the royal chapel, whence you will behold him from the curtained gallery; this very evening—now—at vespers.

DIANA. Ah! perhaps in the chapel, it will not be a sin.

TRIB. A sin! it is your duty madam; recollect you will be instrumental in reclaiming your sovereign—when, for the first time in his life, he will admire beauty and virtue united. (*Bell.*)

DIANA. What is that bell?

TRIB. To summons you to vespers, madam.

DIANA. Then, must I go?

TRIB. It is your duty.

DIANA. Father I follow—lead on—

TRIB. (*Aside.*) Count! the death knell of thy happiness has rung; sister I am yours. (*Exeunt.*) *The bell tolls at intervals till the drop falls.*)

END OF ACT I.

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ACT II.

Hall in the Louvre. Throne and canopy. Two sentries walking to and fro. CHABANNES, CHERUBIN, DE BERCY, PARDILLIAN, *discovered.*

DE BER. So, the threads of this base conspiracy have been discovered and the madman, St. Vallier, condemned to death.

CHAB. Yes; but on the scaffold, for the sake of the beauteous Diana, his majesty granted him a pardon.

DE BER. Not only was the king's life threatened, but the traitors aimed a deadly blow at the young Dauphin.

CHER. Francis would not have survived the death of this noble boy: (*trumpets and kettle-drums. Enter two pages announcing.*—"The king—the king."

CHAB. His majesty approaches; mirth and good humour still sit upon his brow; no danger can ruffle his cheerful mind. (*Enter* FRANCIS—*Guards &c.*)

FRAN. Well gentlemen, I have granted a free pardon to our preacher; the least boon I could bestow in exchange for the fair Diana's smiles, Chabannes, a tourney and festival to-morrow, and since these madmen have not shed our blood, let wine flow instead, and broach as many puncheons as may charm the thoughts of my good citizens of Paris, till the're too blind to cry, "Long live the king." (*Enter* TRIBOULET.)

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TRIB. My liege! a most unwelcome visitor follows me, the Count de St. Vallier himself; he swears he does not thank your majesty for your pardon; and would much rather have come to court like St. Denis with his head under his arm.

FRAN. I cannot see him; let him not pass.

CHAB. It is too late my liege; here he is (*Enter with two guards—The Count in chains.*)

FRAN. (*Seated.*) Strike off the old man's chains (*One of the guards takes off the chains.*) So, Sir Count, you have thought fit to join the standard of rebellion; what could induce you to commit so insane an act?

COUNT. Francis of Valois! I owe you no allegiance; you have bereaved me of all that attached me to my country and my birthright; rendered me an alien in the land of my forefathers; thus, no longer a Frenchman I disclaimed the sovereignty of the king of France.

FRAN. By my holy patron! this is lofty language; Hark ye sir, we allow no prisoners in our dominions, save those the laws and our pleasure deem it meet to consider such; your lady was of high degree, and of a lineage more gentle than your own; she claimed our royal protection from your tyranny; I stretched out my sceptre to shield her from oppression, and so far only have I wronged you; your life is forfeit by your foul offence; yet for her sake do I grant it; and, but for her intercession your head should have fallen beneath the axe of justice.

COUNT. The gift of life sir is an outrage at your hands; nobler would it be for me to lie now stretched a headless corse, than bear through the world a brow stamped with disgrace! She seek your protection! alas! the lamb should sooner seek shelter with the ruthless wolf, the dove a refuge

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with the vulture, than woman flee for an asylum to this polluted court.

FRAN. You forget the respect due to our person.

COUNT. You sir, have forgotten the respect due to my hoary locks.

FRAN. And what respect did you yourself, sir, pay to those gray hairs when you sought the hand, and love of youthful beauty? Go to! poor, man!

COUNT. This is indeed a refinement of cruelty sir, thus to add insult to injury; but mark me! thoughtless monarch, thy days are numbered like mine; the grave yawneth for us both; thy regal purple will not protect thee from the festive worm, that gluts alike upon the prince and peasant; but ere you descend into the gorgeous sepulchre of your ancestors—thus do I prophecy—sorrow shall wring that heart that now beats high in illicit enjoyments; disease shall rack those pliant and luxurious limbs, thy present boast and pride, till death in all it's horrors shall hug thee in his fleshless arms, as closely as my Diana was pressed to thy unhallowed bosom.

FRAN. (*Agitated.*) Hold! thy ravings! I can no longer bear thy screech-owl bodings.

TRIB. Please your majesty the bishop of Autun is a prisoner; methinks old Nostradamus here might as well succeed him; a mitre would grace his dignified forehead better than a morion; if, indeed, he could contrive to put on either.

COUNT. (*To* TRIBOULET.) As for thee, foul fiend! thou very insult to the name and form of man! if it were possible that thou had'st any connexion with mortal being, my curse alight on thee and all that may be thine! may thy loathsome life be as miserable as thy death shall be appalling; once more—may thou and thine be accursed by earth and heaven.

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(*Vesper Bell.*) Hark! Hark the bell of Notre Dame; the same that sounded the signal of my dishonour! thou shalt never hear it's iron tongue vibrate in thine ear without remembering an old man's malediction; now king Francis—send me to the block—or to my dungeon.

FRAN. Bear him away; let the mad driveller moulder in the Bastille until his idle denunciations recoil upon his own head (*rises.*) (*Exit Count and guards.*)

TRIB. (*Agitated.*) "May thee and thine be accursed by earth and heaven."—Ha! an unknown thrill creeps through every fibre of my quivering frame; an awful malediction! —an old man's curse, now hovers o'er my illfated being—Ha! dark forebodings madden me! I must away (*staggers out.*)

FRAN. (*Advancing.*) This dotard's predictions have struck deep; his prophetic energy seemed to have burst from the trammels of age to assume the power of youth; there was something more than mortal in the old man's voice.

CHAB. My liege, heed not the maniacs jealous wandering —he knew not what he said—let him go and crown his wrinkled brow with cypress, while love and pleasure weave for you a wreath of myrtle, and of roses.

FRAN. (*Starting.*) A cup of wine—I say a cup of wine. (*All the pages exit severally, and return with wine in goblets on gold salvers,* FRANCIS *drinks.*)

PARD. Please your majesty, the council entreat your august presence; you have just escaped from a detested conspiracy—an earnest of a long and happy reign.

CHAB. (*Aside to the king.*) And I have to impart some intelligence of the fair damsel.

FRAN. (*Recovering.*) Chabannes—well!

CHAB. You shall hear all my liege; but now permit your

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faithful servants to pledge a cup, to your majesty's long life and prosperity; my lords and gentlemen—here's death to all traitors, and long live the king—the flower of chivalry! the protector of arts, and the night-mare of jealous husbands.

ALL. Long live the king. (*All drink.*)

FRAN. *Grand Merci* my lords; our court must indeed be the envy of the world, when we are thus surrounded by brave knights, whose prowess in the field of honour can only be equalled by their success in the sweet *savoir* of love; where woman's sparkling eye is the mirror of daring chivalry, and her heart the guerdon of their noble deeds (*courtiers retire.*) And now Chabannes that I have brushed away the flitting cloud, what tidings of my fair recluse?

CHAB. Despite of all exertions I have not been able to discover who she is: but I have found out that your love is requited; the old dragon who watches over the treasure is ours, and the conquest of the little cit may be considered certain.

FRAN. Verily thou deservest at least a principality, but we must take heed lest this vulgar amour reach the ears of the fair Diana; she might perhaps doubt the necessity that a king should be acquainted with every class of his subjects; I'll now don my student's garb; and while I am preferring my lowly suit, remain thou near the house, with a few trusty archers, for although treason is abroad, by my faith I cannot remain at home when beauty and adventure shout "on Valois." (*Exit, followed by* CHABANNES, *&c.*

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SCENE II.

Street.—Dark.

Enter TRIBOULET.

TRIB. It must be quickly done; Chabannes, that base sycophant of the royal profligate has been seen lurking about my dwelling! Blanch—my own, my dearest child! must be forthwith removed from danger; I know not why, but the old man's curse seemeth a fatal omen and shatters all my resolves: I sorely wronged him it is true, but what wrongs has not his *order* heaped upon me! why then should this heart—rendered obdurate by ill-treatment—feel one single pang for the misery I inflict—am not I a vile outcast? scarcely considered a human being, spurned by mankind from my very cradle—when I begged for alms to support my tottering frame, I was whipped as a vagrant—when I asked for work, I was spurned and laughed at as an useless being! thus, if a germ of kindness ever lurked in this distorted bosom, it was nipped and blasted by the damning chill of prejudice and pride—I was pointed at, and hooted by what I hate and execrate—that which the world calls beauty! beauty! faugh! a pretty man—a nice man—would eye me thro' his glass, and exclaim—the monster!!! but, when I played the fool—the despicable buffoon—lo! 'twas otherwise, I was courted and pampered; I made man laugh, and perhaps for a moment it forgot its wretched self; my jests, my gibes procured me the sustenance refused to honest industry; the bee was trampled on—the wasp was courted; and when I stung some crawling, yet proud creature, hundreds of his fellow insects enjoyed in roars of delight the

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pangs he endured! Still this hideous form concealed a heart made to love—aye, and fondly too! oh my Blanch! my child! thou alone art all the world to me—and thy wretched father has brought a curse upon thy head. (*Exit.*)

SCENE III.

To the left, a narrow obscure street: to the right TRIBOULET'S *garden and house, separated from the street by a section wall in which is practiced a small door.*)

Enter TRIBOULET, *rushing into the street.*

TRIB. I am followed—tracked by bloodhound panders, no, they have turned into another street; why do I thus dread the pavement echo of my own footsteps, why does my heart quail within my knarled ribs, and its tremulous current chill within my veins! alas! I have too long dared the voice of tardy and retributive conscience, I feel that I have been a burthen upon this beautiful creation; my very child was formed to taunt my misery—still she shall be saved—my poor Blanch—they cannot—they *shall* not tear thee from me; thy virgin prayers *must* arrest the winged thunderbolt of St. Vallier's malediction, (*opens door in wall and goes into the garden.*) Blanch! my child—my beloved Blanch (*Enter* BLANCH *from house, and rushes into his arms.*) Bless thee! my own—my pride! my universe.

BLANCH. Dearest father! what aileth thee; that sad look grieves my soul.

TRIB. Art thou happy sweet child in this dull retreat?

BLANCH. Can I be otherwise when blessed with your affection.

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TRIB. Oh yes, my child, I love thee dearly—dearly—sit thee down (*she sits, he kneels at her feet*) 'twine that beauteous arm around my neck, oh how I delight to gaze upon those heavenly eyes—Blanch—my own Blanch—dost thou know that even when mine are closed, I still behold the sweetness of thy enchanting looks! nay, oft have I wished that I were blind, that I might have no other sun but thee; thy heart beats quick my daughter—feel mine—it throbs for thee alone—thou art to me—child—country—friends—family—the world—my idol upon earth!

BLANCH. Dearest father! it breaks my heart to see you weep thus.

TRIB. (*With concentrated anguish mingled with rage.*) To see me weep—its strings would burst my child, if thou wert doomed to see me *laugh*—say, cans't thou look upon this odious shape, and not despise me?

BLANCH. Despise you—oh, my father! kindness and love like yours need not the aid of outward forms. But prithee relieve my constant uneasiness by clearing the dark mystery that hangs about you; enable your poor child to answer one ever recurring question—what are you?

TRIB. Nothing. (*With bitterness.*)

BLANCH. You lately brought me from my native mountains where I was happy, and now immure me in this dismal solitude.

TRIB. What! is it already irksome to thee?

BLANCH. No, my father, since such is your will; but merely tell me what I am.

TRIB. My daughter. Child of the only being that ever felt a sentiment of kind compassion towards me; oh, how I did love her!! She alone discovered that I possessed a heart, denied me by all around. She knew that the fairest forms

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oft disguise the blackest soul; that deadly nightshade and dire aconite bore flowrets sweet to look upon, while many an unheeded and unsightly weed treasured a panaceum for the troubled mind—and hers was early such—when I—yes I—the wretched thing that stands before thee, did save her mother's life; passing a plank thrown over a stream, bearing in her arms your mother, then an infant, both fell in; the torrent swept them down its rapid course—when I plunged in to rescue. I swam—yes Blanch, I swam! I was not born a human being it seems; since swimming was instinctive, a gift that nature solely grants to brutes!

BLANCH. Oh, my father! your bitterness curdles my blood.

TRIB. Then did your mother grow in strength and beauty near me; she learned to lisp my name and love deformity; I was not, in her eyes, an opaque mass of useless flesh and blood; she read my soul. The scoffs of the rabble excited her compassion and her friendship; she cheered me in my degradation, endeavouring to conceal her tears; and if, in spite of all her efforts, she at times shed some bitter drops upon my wrongs, the choaked ones she restrained to bathe her heart. Oh, Blanch! she was beauteous—thou art her living image upon earth.

BLANCH. Continue, dearest father. What became of her?

TRIB. She was accidentally seen by a young nobleman; he admired her. For me—aye, for me! she rejected the fond entreaties of one of the most fascinating courtiers; a base priest was the pander of the miscreant; thy virtuous mother scorned him and his employer; power prevailed, and she was condemned to the stake as a vile heretic, for her religion was her love!

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BLANCH. Horrible!

TRIB. Yet such my Blanch may be thy fate, if in this pestilential city thy charms be discovered; those gay and gallant cavaliers that women doat on, are gaudy serpents created to fascinate and destroy. Tell me Blanch, come tell me truly—tell thy poor father, hast thou, since in this Paris, seen any of these handsome popinjays?

BLANCH. I understand you not.

TRIB. Hast thou been often abroad?

BLANCH. Only to church—to our blessed lady's shrine.

TRIB. Ha! of course with thy face veiled—a mantle thrown around thee.

BLANCH. Sometimes

TRIB. What! only sometimes!! And ame Perrette ever with thee?

BLANCH. Ever.

TRIB. 'Tis well Blanch; to-morrow at day-break, we must depart.

BLANCH. (*Anxiously.*) To-morrow, sir!

TRIB. To-morrow, sir! Yes—to-morrow—just now thou dids't complain of this solitude (*earnestly,*) has Paris then some secret charm for thee?

BLANCHE. (*With hesitation.*) No, sir; but—but this sudden intimation.

TRIB. I see (*Aside bitterly.*) The curse begins to work—Dame Perrette.

DAME. (*Inside house.*) Coming, sweet master—coming.

TRIB. Confound thy flattering tongue. (*Enter* DAME PERRETTE *from house.*) Come hither, Dame Perrette; closer—closer still—thou tremblest like a spaniel crouching for a merited castigation; guilt sits upon thy wizened brow, beldame.

DAME. May the blessed saints protect me!—guilty—of

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what?—true, I ate pork and lentils last Friday, for which Saint Genevieve forgive me.

TRIB. Is that the whole of thy offence?

DAME. Pardon me; I omitted confessing to father Luke that I had skipped over a few penitential aves and coveted gossip Magdeline's tabby cat.

TRIB. Hark'ye, crocodile! chameleon! that coulds't take any form save that of beauty to serve thy purposes—did I not confide to thee this precious treasure?

DAME. And have I not been true to my trust?

TRIB. Aye, in leading her to vespers and to matins, for ought I know harridan.

DAME. Matins—blessings on me! the sweet young lady, she sleeps twelve hours a day; and all the matin bells in Christendom could not awaken her.

TRIB. And hast thou not allowed her to go out without hood, veil or mantle, to be gazed at by every pampered and perfumed coxcomb.

DAME. We have not so much as seen any thing in the shape of something we could swear was a man.

BLANCH. Indeed, dear father! you wrong Dame Perrette; she never loses sight of me for a moment.

TRIB. Well, well, my child, let every thing thou hast be packed up in haste; two horses shall be in readiness to bear you to a safe asylum; where gallant cavaliers never set their cloven feet; look to it Perrette—fidelity—and—activity or, mark me! this steel shall seek acquaintance with thy withered heart—Blanch, my beloved! farewell! (*Embraces her tenderly.*) farewell, my child! (TRIBOULET *crosses*—DAME PERRETTE *opens door.*)

TRIB. (*Aside going off.*) Oh, I feel as though it were my last adieu. (*Exit, cautiously looking round when in the street.*)

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DAME. Here's pretty usage for a respectable woman! Marry, come up! his dagger shall get acquainted with my too tender heart (*aside.*) I fear it not, old Scaramouch! for I shall sheath its point in gold. (*clinking a purse.*) I verily believe, my dear young lady, your good father's upper story is as badly furnished as our poor lodgings.

BLANCHE. I know not what ails him of late; but his suspicions I fear render him miserable.

DAME. Suspicions! of what! that you—young and handsome fit to be at least a princess, or a duchess—should learn that you possessed a susceptible heart, that you did not wish to pine and moan in a dungeon, and that because no lady could possibly look kindly on the cross old gentleman, his fair daughter is not to bestow a smile on a good-looking fellow.

BLANCH. If he did but know that this young and handsome student who follows me to church,—constantly lurks about the house—

DAME. And where's the harm pray? Has he not the same right as we to kneel at our blessed lady's shrine?

BLANCH. True; but while he tells his beads, hidden behind a pillar, his eyes are ever fixed on me.

DAME. To be sure, thy pretty smile would make a saint of the most roistering sinner.

BLANCH. My good Perrette, don't flatter.

DAME. Flatter! the king himself would doff his crown for one single rosy smile of thine.

BLANCH. And tell me truly, Goody, dost positively think the youth loves me?

DAME. Think it! swear it by the bones of every saint in the calendar. (*Aside.*) This must be the hour—ah, sweet child! I once loved and was dearly loved in turn—old as I now am—I'll tell thee all about it in this bower. (*They enter*

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a bower and are seen in earnest conversation. Enter into the street, FRANCIS I. *dressed as a student*—CHABANNES *wrapped in a mantle and archers also cloaked.*)

CHAB. This is the house my liege; the mysterious visitor has just passed us without recognizing your majesty.

FRAN. 'Tis well good Chabannes, fix the ladder and remain within my call, for these are fearful times when even lovers must be cautious. (*aside.*) I know not why, but for the first time in all my adventurous life do I experience reluctance in pursuit and dread of its results; that old man's prophecy!—come, come Valois, banish apprehension and be thyself again.

CHAB. The ladder is fixed my liege and success attend you.

FRAN. Remember—within call—(*He goes over the wall,* DAME PERRETTE *sees him and leads* BLANCH *to the front.*)

CHAB. And you, my good archers, pace around every purlieu, and in the King's name, stop the progress of all curious intruders. (*Exit with archers.* DAME PERRETTE *and* BLANCH *come to the front, while* FRANCIS *glides in behind them, after having made a sign to* PERRETTE.)

DAME. And so you often think of this young gallant?

BLANCH. Ever good Perrette! Even in my slumbers, busy fancy pourtrays him, as when I first beheld him at our Lady's church, enveloped in his mantle, and half concealed behind a massive pillar, fixing his ardent eyes on me.

DAME. Yes, dear young lady; they *are* ardent, but yet soft and sweet, just like those of my poor departed Jeanty, (peace be with him,) whose eyes were ever sparkling with love or liquor—do you know I am certain that this unknown student of yours is some nobleman in disguise.

BLANCH. Prithee, say not so—oh, no, no! A youth of

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high degree could not thus follow and admire a poor thing like me, without base motives; tell me Perrette, on the contrary, that he is of my own station in life—what he appears to be, a poor and humble student.

DAME. (*Who has looked back to the king, who throws her a purse.*) Well, so be it—so be it. Yet his features betray a distinguished rank; nay, be not uneasy about it, silly child; love knows not birth, and many an humble damsel, much less beauteous than you—verily dairy maids and shepherdesses, have oft exchanged their chaplet of wild flowers for a royal crown or a ducal coronet; at any rate, if your timid suitor be not a noble—every look and *action* shew the gentleman—*(she looks at the purse)*—but it's no use thinking of him; at day-break your father takes you away—Heaven and our Lady of Bologne knows where. (BLANCH *sighs heavily.*) Heigho!

FRAN. Take her away at daybreak? By my crown this shall not be. (*Aside.*)

DAME. What can induce your father, sweet lady, thus to bear you away at a moment's notice? There is something strangely mysterious in all this; do you know all the neighbours are talking about him; some say he is the wandering Jew: others, the old man of the mountains; Master Froth, the barber, swears he's a dabbler in the black art; and gossip Ferret insists that he's in compact with the old gentleman—thanks to my blessed saints, I have not a spark of curiosity about me; yet have I listened at doors and peeped through key-holes, and followed and watched him: and once I even got under a bed—a situation most uncomfortable in my mind—yet have I never been able to discover who or what he is. Why is it then that because he is—

BLANCH. (*Severely.*) My father, Dame Perrette.

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DAME. I was only going to say—because he is not what a body might call handsome by no means—he should wish to deprive a beautiful young lady like you of a great blessing, or, a very necessary evil—a husband.

BLANCH. His will, Perrette, must be my law.

DAME. Surely! But it's a sad pity that his will has not a better way; when I was young, alack-a-day, I took care that both should suit my fancy; now, suppose this handsome student declared to you his love; swore he lived only for you; would throw himself off a house top if you frown'd on him; and fight the great Mogul for a smile—what would you do?

BLANCH. Obey my father. Without any reason apparent to me he is miserable enough—what would be his sad fate were I to give him cause of sorrow! He tells me the world scorns him—his child's embrace is then his only refuge; he says he abhors mankind; then is it my duty to convince him by my affection, that there does exist a being who wishes to reconcile him to his dark destinies.

DAME. You are right, lady—quite right—yet I cannot but pity the poor youth; to love you so fondly, and lose you for ever.

BLANCH. For ever!—nay, good Perrette.

DAME. Well, since you cannot love him; it is better that you should part to meet no more.

BLANCH. (*Affected.*) I do not love him! alas, Perrette! I fear he is any thing but indifferent to my sad heart.—(FRANCIS *rushes forward to throw himself at* BLANCH'S *feet—she shrieks.*)

FRAN. Hush! gentle lady, be not alarmed in beholding at your feet the happiest of men.

BLANCH. Rise, sir, I beseech you; in mercy's name, what brought you here?

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FRAN. The most fervent love that ever fired a mortal bosom; it was but just now that unexpected bliss succeeded dark despair, when I heard those lips pronounce that my fond suit was welcome.

BLANCH. Whoever you are, sir, do not abuse this weakness of a silly girl; you are, I hope, a man of honour, and not one of those gay and deceitful courtiers my father abhors, who pride in our sorrow and glory in our tears; I am a stranger to the world, sir, yet methinks your language is not that of the poor student whose garb you wear.

FRAN. Yet a poor and humble scholar am I—I long and vainly sought for wisdom in musty books and in dark studies, but now a heavenly beam has illumined my soul, and I seek for real bliss in the sweet lore of love.

BLANCH. (*With timidity.*) And—what may be your name?

FRAN. Francis.

BLANCH. Your family's?

FRAN. Beauregard.

BLANCH. Then Francis Beauregard—thus do I reply to your fond expressions, which, since you have unwarrantably listened to my idle talk, I should fain hope would prove sincere—I permit you to address my father on the subject.

FRAN. Who is the happy man, thrice blessed with such a child?

BLANCH. A mystery dark and unaccountable hangs around us, be it your business to draw aside the veil and ascertain who and what I am, and if then, sir, your sentiments remain unchanged, and my poor father grant his consent, what can I add?—alas! I yield to fate that caused us to meet, in the hope that there may be faith in man; until then, sir, permit me to preserve the privacy enjoin'd me. (*Exit into the house.*)

FRAN. Amiable, excellent girl! and it is thus that in

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these obscure and humble abodes I meet more pure and endearing virtue than in my Louvre halls.

DAME. (*Who had withdrawn up the stage, comes down.*) Well, good sir, I told you how 'twould be, you have won the day

FRAN. Aye, and feel it a prouder victory than any I have ever gained.

DAME. Gained a victory! mercy on me! my mind misgives me. Sir, who and what are you?

FRAN. You hold my portrait in your hand.

DAME. (*looks at a coin.*) Oh! I thought as much; I knew there was nobility in your looks, oh, my most gracious and magnificent sovereign! I hope my freedom—only to think it, I've been talking to a king! Oh, my lord! please your illustrious majesty, the girl adores you; is ready to fall into fits for your omnipotent royalty, hysterics and quandaries. Oh, by the gridiron that roasted St. Laurence! I should never, never—oh, bless your glorious majesty!

FRAN. Tush old woman!

DAME. (*Aside.*) Old woman! now that's unkind even from royalty.

FRAN. Who is that girl's father?

DAME. An anonymous madman, please your transcendent majesty. Moreover as ugly a sinner as your eyes ever beheld in a week's walk; and I must also inform your majesty he's as obstinate as any buck or bear in your majesty's demesnes. Lord love your royal head, he'd kick a donkey to make him bray *mea culpa*, that's what he would; and at cock-crow to-morrow morning, great potentate, he intends to carry off this little innocent of his—that is, when I say of his, it's a way of speaking; for as I said just now, your immortal majesty never beheld such a fright; and though he passes for her father, I have ever fancied (saving your

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majesty's presence) that he must have found her, as they say, under a gooseberry bush, for she has always been a thorn in his side, poor man!

FRAN. Well, well, I shall endeavour to save her from perdition.

DAME. Bless your royal head—your majesty's just the one to do it.

FRAN. What's your name?

DAME. Perrette, at your imperial order and command.

FRAN. This night I bear thy charge to the palace, and shall endeavour to secure her a happier fate—open that door (*points to the door in wall, which* PERETTE *opens*).

DAME. Oh! what would become of poor silly girls without protection!

FRAN. (*Whistles.*)

Enter CHABANNES *and* ARCHERS.

CHAB. This damsel's father, who, it seems, is little better than a madman, purposes bearing her away by dawn of day; perhaps beyond our dominions. This abduction (although parental, we must prevent); let her therefore be carried to the Louvre. Dame Perette, go thou and prepare her for an interview with her sovereign; but speak not to her of Francis Beauregard. Let her not think him capable of an uncourteous act to an unprotected damsel—let her still fancy me the poor student she first saw and loved; happier in the intricacies of crabbed lore than in the labyrinth of royal councils. When her father returns and misses her, tell him—

DAME. What?

FRAN. Tell him, his daughter's at the Louvre. (*Exit through door in wall.*)

DAME. That would be a nicer composing draught to the

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poor silly man than ever your majesty's apothecary could compound—but woe betide me when he comes home! I must follow or I'm undone. (*To* CHABANNES.) Perhaps, my lord, since his majesty takes the mistress under his sacred protection, your worship would be bountiful enough to compassionate the poor maid who has a mighty wish to see the Louvre too. (*Exit into the house with* CHABANNES.)

END OF ACT II.

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ACT III.—SCENE I.

A small Chamber in the Louvre—through the centre Door two Sentries are seen pacing in the Vestibule.

BLANCH *discovered at a Table in deep thought.*

BLANCH. What can this mean? summoned before the king, who has not yet appeared, and confined to this room a close prisoner. Oh! my poor father! if he knew that I was in the power of the King how wretched would he be. Oft has he told me with bitterness depicted on his brow — "Ah, Blanch! if Francis beheld thee for an instant, thou art lost for ever!" Yet why should I fear him? he is, they say, a noble and generous prince, and surely could not sue for a heart that never, never can be his.—But some one approaches; as I live 'tis Francis Beauregard. What can bring him here?

(*Enter* FRANCIS, *wrapped up in a mantle.*)

Oh, master Beauregard, if you are aught in this place, come to my relief: well I knew your humble garb concealed some higher person than a simple student. Alas! you have deceived me.

FRAN. No, gentle Blanch, I sincerely feel the sentiments I expressed; if I appeared what I am not, it was to discover whether my love really met with a fond return.

BLANCH. Then in pity tell me who you are.

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FRAN. Ever your faithful Francis: but not Beauregard. Francis of Valois,—your sovereign, yet your slave. (*Throws off his cloak,*)

BLANCH. Heavens! what do I hear! Oh, then in mercy, let me supplicate your majesty to restore me to my wretched father. The whole night have I thought on nought but his anguish, when on his return he found his daughter fled, his hearth deserted!

FRAN. Your father, dear maid, will soon forgive you, when he learns my ardent love.

BLANCH. Never, sire; you little know the firmness of his stern resolves.

FRAN. But when I raise you to the highest dignity in the kingdom—?

BLANCH. The more elevated my station, my liege, the more conspicuous will he deem my disgrace.

FRAN. Blanch, if the sincerest love, my vows of everlasting faith can make you happy——

BLANCH. They were already pledged, my lord, to your royal consort.

FRAN. That was a union of state policy and cold speculation; whilst ours shall be the ties of mutual attachment, since I have discovered that I am not indifferent to your heart.

BLANCH. Francis Beauregard, my liege, I might have loved with honour; the addresses of Francis, King of France, could only be received with disgrace. Once more, my lord, in pity let me return to my disconsolate father.

FRAN. What! to be borne by his capricious will beyond my dominions;—torn from me for ever? Nay, Blanch, frown not thus on one on whom so very lately you kindly smiled, and for no other reason than my being born a

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prince. Stay in this court;—become its pride—its ornament—and let me lavish on you and your's, those favours that my power confers at will.

BLANCH. My liege, you have a son ——

FRAN. I have.

BLANCH. You love him, sire?

FRAN. Beyond expression! What then?

BLANCH. (*With calmness, yet determination.*) And I, sire, have a father.

FRAN. (*Aside.*) That powerful reply has frozen the hot tide of my mantling blood.

BLANCH. Your majesty would rather see that son, the generous Dauphin, brought home a corpse upon an unstained shield, than returning to your court with a tarnished escutcheon.

FRAN. Generous girl!

BLANCH. Suffice it—you have known the simple Blanch will ever bear in fond remembrance the student Francis Beauregard; but let her also respect the virtues of Francis I.; if you wish to bestow your royal bounty on me, permit me to enter some holy nunnery, where, in its solemn cloisters, I shall never think on one I fondly believed my equal without prefering a fervent prayer for the prosperity and glory of my king.

FRAN. Noble damsel! Thy will shall ever be my law: thou art free to depart, in virtue as in peace; but first inform me who is your father, who thus graces his humble station by such lofty ideas of honour?

BLANCH. I can only repeat what I have already stated to your majesty: I know not his condition; I was reared in the mountains of Jura from my infancy; and there, most probably, should I have still remained, had not our Suzerran

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lord, when hunting near my cottage, seen me and resolved to bear to me to his castle. A worthy priest informed me of his base designs, and I fled to a neighbouring convent for protection; thence I was brought to the obscure dwelling near this palace, which your majesty honoured with your presence. More I know not, save that, from some secret motive, my father seems at war with all mankind, and thinks the whole universe as hostile to him as he feels deep aversion to all that bears a human form.

FRAN. Ha! What a thought! (*Aside.*) Tell me, Blanch, is he not deformed?

BLANCH. The world, my liege, might say he is. (*With hesitation.*)

FRAN. What is his usual dress?

BLANCH. When he comes near me, he ever carefully conceals it.

FRAN. But have you not observed some difference in his apparel from other men?

BLANCH. Yes, sire, I have remarked that his hose and doublet are of a party-colour; and once I found him concealing a cap and bells, such as, I have heard, mummers and jesters wear.

FRAN. (*Aside.*) It must be my poor Triboulet! And I, for whose pleasure he has mortgaged his very soul, was going to rob him of all that Providence had left him!—Blanch, thy father I well know: no longer shall he fill the irksome station, near our person, that he now holds: henceforth he shall be free and independent. Accept, dear maid, this purse—a slender earnest of my future intentions; and also take this chain—suspend it round thy father's neck, and bid him attend upon me early on the morrow. Farewell—farewell, sweet girl! I proudly feel that all my triumphs

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in unhallowed loves, never gladdened this heart with the pure pleasure it now enjoys. In waiting there—

(*Enter* CHABANNES *and* OFFICERS.)

Let this gentle lady be conducted to her home hard by the palace; let every token of respect be shewn her; nay, I would my very sentinels presented their pertuisans at her approach, for virtue such as her's is now so rare in courts, that guards should turn out and salute when she appears. (BLANCH *kisses hands; the King embraces her affectionately, and she departs with a lingering look behind her, followed by* OFFICERS.)

FRAN. What think'st thou Chabannes, of that young person?

CHAB. I'm amazed, my liege, to see her thus depart.

FRAN. What! amazed to see thy sovereign virtuous, and able to control unruly passions?

CHAB. Not so, my lord; but methinks many a less beauteous fair has found favour in your majesty's eyes.

FRAN. But wouldst thou believe that angelic creature calls Triboulet her father.

CHAB. Triboulet!!!

FRAN. Even so; the poor rogue deserved this mercy at my hands; for see—(*shews a paper*)—how actively the fellow ministers to our pleasure; he has obtained for me this very night an interview with the far-famed La Ferronière, at the inn hard by the Tower of Nesles.

CHAB. What, my lord! the inn of the ferry?

FRAN. The same; there do I meet her in the disguise of a trainband captain, when the clock strikes ten.

CHAB. Then go not unattended my liege; the place is a noted resort of bandits and base Bohemians; nay, it is said that dark deeds of blood have been perpetrated in its infamous purlieus.

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FRAN. I fear neither bandits nor dark gipseys; my steel corslet and this trusty sword, shall set them at defiance. Moreover, Chabannes, I shall feel greater delight in having respected the simple damsel thou hast seen depart, when I behold a lady of our court, of high degree, meeting me in the cut-throat place you dread.

CHAB. At any rate, sire, permit me to be in its vicinity, with a trusty guard.

FRAN. That I allow; but stir not on thy life, until thou hearest our given signal. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

An humble room in TRIBOULET'S *lodging.—A large mantle, and* TRIBOULET'S *hat on table.—Table, two chairs, and lamp on table, lighted.*

TRIBOULET *discovered in deep thought.*

TRIB. Old man, thy curse is thriving! Thou hast not struck the seed of malediction in an unyielding soil; the young shoot is blasted—the parent tree scathed and leafless! I am now a withered trunk, standing alone in the desert.—Oh, my poor Blanch! why did I not strangle thee when the old toothless, grinning crone came to announce to me, I had a lovely daughter! Why wert thou not born as hideous as the wretch to whom thou owest thy miserable existence? Thy purity had singled thee in my eyes from the base herd of mankind; thy celestial form seemed not created for earthly pollution; but now, alas! how fallen! thou art now a woman! False as the hell whence thy seducer sprung! base as the sycophants who crouch around his throne!—Alas! base as myself! Yet there are some who will think the poor

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fool honoured—forsooth, his daughter will be a duchess!—the father provided for!—aye, provided for—(*with a desperate laugh.*)—Ha! ha! ha!—provided for!! A kingly and kind expression, that meaneth in court language—fed upon infamy!—glutted on the carrion remains of his dishonoured child! Thank heaven! no noble and ambitious blood flows in these distorted limbs; I am a poor, vulgar caitiff; yet the spurned cur would rather perish in the gnawing pangs of hunger, than have his heirs boast proudly of their barred armorials, and insolently sport the badge of regal infamy! Not all the guards that watch thy Louvre's halls, shall save thee, Francis, from thy fool's revenge! My heart is now bursting! bursting!—but the volcano of its explosion shall pour a burning lava on the tyrant's soul. My plans are laid—well laid: he has cast his fascinating eyes upon the lovely La Feronnière—ah, as beauteous as was once my daughter! I have promised him an interview with his intended victim; but instead of a luxurious couch, he shall find his grave!—instead of beauty's chiselled arms, the fangs of death shall fold him in their grasp! If discovered, joy shall rock my soul, when, as a base regicide, four active horses shall tear my limbs asunder;—my expiring voice shall urge their speed, until at last its faltering sounds shall proudly lisp, "I die content! I've killed the king!" (*Noise at the door.*) Who comes there?

Enter BLANCH, *she attempts to rush into her father's arms, but he repels her with horror.*

TRIB. Approach me not, lest this steel carve out the ruffian's image from thy heart.

BLANCH. (*Supplicating.*) Oh, my father!

TRIB. Let me not hear thy voice.

BLANCH. In pity hear me!

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TRIB. What canst thou have to say? [Gaze on yon mirror; there contemplate thy brow; once thy hands were wont (like those of thy poor mother's), to put aside those auburn locks to show thy innocence;—but now, cover it! veil it for ever! for infamy is written in fiery characters on that once pure tablet of thy spotless virtue.

BLANCH. Heaven knows sir, I am innocent?

TRIB. Innocent!—and an inmate of a palace for one entire night?

BLANCH. Father, you wrong me, as much as you are unjust to our gracious sovereign.

TRIB. Gracious!! Ha! ha! ha! ha! yes, I see—that golden chain around thy neck is no doubt a token of his *gracious* condescension!

BLANCH. It was for you my father he gave it me.

TRIB. For me! for me! a golden chain! Fiends of hell—Hark'ye, girl! dost thou dare add mockery to thy depravity?

BLANCH. In mercy's name, sir, hear me; hear me calmly, ere the torrent of your wrath hurls us all headlong into a gulph of misery.

TRIB. Girl! can I be more miserable than I am?

BLANCH. Sir! I swear by my mother's memory—

TRIB. Thy mother! name her not; call not on her sacred shades, lest they rise embodied and scourge thee with scorpion whips into dark regions, where thou never can'st behold her sainted spirit.

BLANCH. Kill me, sir, if such be your will, but in my dying moments I will declare, in the presence of heaven, the king is as guiltless as your unhappy child!

TRIB. Guiltless! guiltless! have I not eyes? did I not see the ruffian, Chabannes, leading thee to the Louvre?

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Alas, I rushed after thee as quickly as these rebellious limbs could bear me—but I came too late—the palace gates were closed—in vain I raved and uttered frantic cries for my child, that would have raised the dead—the sentinels drove me away like an unwelcome cur, whose barks and yells disturbed their masters rest and pleasures. Francis, guiltless! No, if all the royal skeletons of his ancestors rose from their proud sepulchres to affirm it! I'd drive back their mouldering bones to the hell that pour'd them forth, and tell them they basely lied (*perceiving the purse hanging at her girdle*)—Ha! and that purse at thy girdle, studded with the royal arms. Ha! ha, ha, ha! that is doubtless another badge of *thy* purity and his innocence. (*Furiously snatching it from her.*)—Give it me this instant! Ha! gold—gold! It was all that I wanted (*with composure looking at and counting the money.*)—Blanch, all is well—all will be well! See! I breathe freely—I am no longer agitated; a mountain has been removed from my bosom, Blanch.

BLANCH. Dearest father!

TRIB. Blanch—this night—aye—in an hour—we must depart.

BLANCH. I am ready to follow you to the world's end.

TRIB. We must depart—quit the country; two horses shall be in readiness; haste, put thee on the man's attire in which I brought thee here—dos't thou hear me? put it on—to-night—to-night—we must depart! (*A gentle tap at the door.*)—Ha! 'tis he—haste into thy room: haste, I say; on with thy disguise; I say once more away, girl—away!

BLANCH. (*Entering her room.*) May heaven protect me!

Enter MELCHIOR.

(*During the following scene* BLANCH *is discovered at the door listening with horror.*)

TRIB. Thou art late, good Melchior, very late.

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MEL. Aye, it needed caution to steal to thy nest; those hell hounds of the Provost were tracking me; it is time to tramp, or I shall dangle like an acorn.

TRIB. Good Melchior! kind Melchior! in a few moments he will be at thy house.

MEL. Who?

TRIB. The train-band captain of whom I told thee; the miscreant who debauched my child; an outlawed ruffian—not satisfied with one victim, he shortly expects another triumph at the ferry inn, kept by thy sister: there does he purpose to spend the night in revelry; there, Melchior, let him sleep for ever!

MEL. Hark'ye, Master Triboulet, I have no objection to the job; it is my trade, and every industrious man must eke out a living; but I like not dealing with these men-at-arms.

TRIB. I knew it, and have provided for all; here, take this phial, a few drops in his goblet, and were he a Goliath, in a few seconds he becomes an easy prey. Blunt not thy dagger on the corslet that he wears; 'tis proof against thy steel; but strike there (*pointing to his throat*)—just *there*, kind Melchior, let out the vital puddle of the knave.

MEL. Dost thou want to teach me my craft, gossip Triboulet? And prithee, dos't think that for thy poor paltry hundred crowns, I'll add to my chances of the tree?

TRIB. (*Shewing the purse and chain.*) See here—see here—and here! This bursting purse of gold, just fresh from the royal mint, it shall be thine, so shall this massive chain; all these, and this passport, a sure safeguard, to bear thee out of the kingdom, with which thou cans't pass unheeded through all his majesty's armies; all shall be thine when thou deliverest me the caitiff's carcass. Here is a mantle, let it become his winding sheet; I shall watch at thy door,

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bring me my prey, good Melchior, and all this treasure's thine: when the blow is struck, just whistle; thus, then will I receive my victim, and bless thy avenging hand for ever!

MEL. Well, a bargain; my sister expects me. I told her I had a job on hand this night, but her silly scruples——

TRIB. May be silenced by a few drops of that precious liquor; but haste thee to the ferry, he is, perhaps, there already; borne on the wings of profligacy, the fellow cleaves the very air, haste thee to the ferry; and mark me, spare him not, he did not spare me! and let thy dagger pierce his throat as keenly as he has smitten this tortured heart. (*Exeunt.*)

BLANCH (*comes forward.*) Horror has curdled every drop of my blood. Just heaven! what a project: Oh, Francis! (for it can be no other victim,) Francis Beauregard! my king! my friend, thus to be basely slaughtered! No, no, it shall not be; in the man's attire my father ordered me to put on, will I fly to the ferry, seek admittance, and warn him of his danger. May heaven grant me strength.—(*Exit.*)

SCENE III.

The Inn at the Ferry.—Table with lamp, jugs, flagons, chairs. —A staircase leading to a subterranean passage.—Thunder-storm.

ZERLINA. (*discovered.*) This storm in the dark heavens portends no good on earth; but what need we poor persecuted Bohemians care for the turmoils that perplex the world, since we are condemned never to taste its sweets, except by cunning industry. (*Thunder.*) Mercy o' me! what a night for a

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lover to stir abroad! but more fit for the bloody work which I fear will be perpetrated here ere long. My outlawed brother tells me he has a sad task to perform this night, which will enable him to escape from the fangs of justice; he then quits the country, and I shall follow, for I'm sick at heart with all I witness here. (*Knock at the door.*) Some one knocks—no doubt it is the ill-fated lover drawn into the toils. Who comes there?

FRAN. (*without.*) A friend.

ZER. The word?

FRAN. Bohemia.

ZER. 'Tis well; enter good traveller.—(*Enter* FRANCIS, *wrapped in a cloak, under which a steel corslet, and the dress of a roving Captain.*)

ZER. Dear me! what a pity! such a handsome man. The weather is wet and bleak, good sir; throw off your cloak and draw near the fire.

FRAN. (*clasping her waist.*) The fire, my pretty wench; dost think a bold freebooter like me can ever feel the nipping of a cold wind when near so blooming and fair a maid? Were I stretched upon alpine snows, one kiss from those ambrosial lips would thaw my frozen blood like sun-beams of Araby. (*Kisses her.*) And by the mass! its perfumes hang upon thy breath.

ZER. Come Captain, that's what all you gay cozeners tell every simple damsel and truant dame; so prithee reserve your kisses for the lady you expect.

FRAN. So then you know my secret. What is your name, lovely?

ZER. Zerlina, sir, at your service.

FRAN. Then I'll tell thee Zerlina, the lady I expect is noble born; and her condescension in thus loving a needy soldier

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of fortune, flatters my vanity, while it fills my purse; but on my hilt, sweet gipsey, if thou would'st accept her gold, and give me in return a few kind looks from those dark gazelle eyes, I should feel prouder than in a noble adventure.

ZER. (*Aside.*) And this man doomed to die—nay—nay—it never shall be.

FRAN. There, take this gold cross as an earnest of my truth; and when we part to-morrow, thou shalt find the wood-ranger worth a fond return.

ZER. You are modest.

FRAN. Come, lovely Bohemian, thou hast no doubt good skill in palmistry, like all thy boon, but vagrant companions—thus let me cross thy hand to learn my fate, but I see a lute—art thou also a sweet songtress Zerlina?

ZER. Sometimes, sir, I venture on a foreign strain.

FRAN. Then let me hear thee (*as she fetches the lute.*) By my patron! she is charming—oh princes! how much we loose by not being oftener with our subjects, come little syren, (*sits.*)

ZER. (*Aside, and tuning the instrument.*) Oh may I succeed in warning him of his danger; I shall sing you a little ballad, sir, on a true story.

FRAN. Of course—how once upon a time—go on—

SONG, ZERLINA.—(*Wade.*)

Good traveller do not pass my gate
Said a warder to a knight,
The rain falls fast; the hour is late
So from thy horse alight.

Gra' mercy! sir, the traveller said,
I'd fain accept thy cheer;
But I've been warned by gipsy maid,
That death and danger's near.

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'Thefore gra'mercy! friend, once more
I must my road pursue;
For lightning flash and thunder roar,
Are safer far than you.

And well I ween 'twas for the knight,
He met that gipsey maid;
Else had his corpse—a dismal sight
In gory grave been laid.

FRAN. *Who had listened with increased curiosity and agitation.* (*aside.*) Ha! there is some mystery in this gipsey's song—could there be treachery abroad—come Francis! Francis! shame upon thee—that is an interesting ditty Zerlina—here's my palm—what see'st thou in my destinies?

ZER. In this hand I behold treachery and danger.

FRAN. And how to avoid it?

ZER. Relying implicitly on a dark woman who watches over you.

FRAN. (*uneasily.*) What—no other means of setting peril at defiance.

ZER. None, (*noise without,*) hush! in the name of mercy!

FRAN. Confusion! I'm betrayed—I'll call my guard.

Enter MELCHIOR, ZEPPO, *and* RODOLPH.

FRAN. It is too late, we must prepare for the worst, (*sits down near the fire.*)

MEL. So, thou hast gallant company good sister.

ZER. Yes, Melchior—a benighted captain has asked a night's asylum: but in truth to await the arrival of the damsel of his heart.

MEL. 'Tis well; I suppose by your morion and corslet good soldier, thou art leader of one of those wary bands called the flayers; welcome to this humble abode—it seemeth poor, but it is safe, here you need not apprehend surprise—aye—the king's guards themselves could not discover the secret recesses of this haunt unless initiated in the mysteries

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of Bohemy; Hollo! Zerlina—a flagon and glasses—a fresh tap for our brave guest and my jolly companions—sit down my boys—come captain, a bumper—here's confusion to the law. (*They drink, repeating the toast,*) and now Zeppo a song—a song.

SONG, ZEPPO. *(Nathan.)*

Drink, drink, and a fig for all sorrow,
We'll frighten blue devils away;
Who cares if we all hang to-morrow,
Provided we're joyous to-day.

Chorus.

Then push round the cup and be merry,
Brave boys only, once we can die;
And 'tis time when we step in death's ferry
To bid our bright flagons good bye.

MEL. Now noble captain! here's a health to the knight's of the sword.

ZEP. (*Examining the hilt of* FRANCIS' *sword.*) A trusty and true Toledo, no doubt.

FRAN. Aye: and has cleared its way at Marignan.

(*While* FRANCIS *is thus engaged,* MELCHIOR *pours the contents of the phial into his cup.*)

(*A watch outside.*) Who comes there.

(*A voice without.*) France and Valois.

(*The watch.*) Pass France and Valois—all's well. (MEL. ZEPPO, &c. *start up to the door,* ZERLINA *whispers* FRANCIS.)

ZER. Away with that beverage; pretend to drink it, and then to sleep.

ZEP. 'Tis nothing but the grand Provost's round.

MEL. High dangling to him in his own orchard (*turns and sees* FRANCIS *pretending to be emptying his cup.*) So my thirsty soul thou hast thrown off thy drink already—thou art fit to be one of us; now honest, skip the ladder my boy, give us the second chaunt of the stave.

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The king by his archers surrounded,
Can't keep the grim foe from his hall;
When once his shrill trumpet has sounded
The boldest must answer the call.

(*The king gradually appears to sleep*—MELCHIOR, &c. *rise cautiously, anxiety of* ZERLINA.)

MEL. He's snug my boys.

ZEPPO. Prudence! prudence, gentlemen! Trust not to appearances; I like not that long spit of his.

MEL. Coward! Now for it.

ZER. (*Holding him.*) Brother, in mercy's name, spare the ill-fated man!

MEL. Yes—and to-morrow the provost will set us all dancing a jig to the tune of our clinking chains; 500 gold crowns, my lads for this job; so to the vault. (*He touches a spring and the king's chair, sinks through a trap.*)

ZER. Have you not one spark of compassion?

ZEPPO. Yes: for ourselves, Miss Charity.

ZER. And you, good Zeppo,—you who often said you loved me—grant me but this request.

ZEPPO. Sweet miss Zerlina, I'm in the minority. (*Descends stairs* R. *trap.*)

ZER. Then there is no mercy in mankind.

MEL. No more than in your sex; if we plunge our daggers in a heart for lucre, you break it for your amusement so away, silly wench—no more! On my lads—

ZER. Ruffian! I will rouse him, and in a good cause he'll brave your cowardly daggers.

MEL. Thy words are wind; thunder could not awaken him. (*Casts her off and descends trap.*)

ZER. Mercy! mercy! (*Descends Trap after them.—Scene closes.*)

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SCENE IV.

The Ferry.—Ferry Inn, Tower of Nesles.

Thunder, lightning.—A boat with FERRYMAN, *and* BLANCH *in man's attire, pushes to the bank.—they get out.*

FER. A good night to you, young master, and our Lady guard you; keep a sharp look out, for many a curious chap has paid dearly for a peep in this quarter; the youngster must be either mad or in love. (*Re-enters his boat after receiving his passage-money, and pushes off.*)

BLANCH. Yes; this must be the house: may heaven grant me fortitude to perform the task it has imposed upon me; it is in the cause of truth and honour, and in saving the life of my sovereign, do I not also rescue my ill-fated father from an ignominious death? On Blanch, and fear not! (*Knocks at door.*) All is silent. (*Listening at the door.*) No: I hear voices—they are in loud debate; a female is amongst them; oh! if she possesses the heart of a woman, if she be mother—daughter—sister—she must assist me. (*Knocks again loudly.*)

ZER. (*Within.*) Who's there?

BLANCH. A benighted traveller, too late for the ferry, who entreats a night's shelter from the storm. (*The door opens.*) Our Lady and my good saints protect me! (*Exit into house.*)

Enter CHABANNES *and* PARDILLIAN.

CHAB. Methinks I saw a slender form glide by.

PARD. You are right, my lord; a female voice demanded admission at that cut-throat pot-house, and was immediately let in.

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CHAB. 'Tis well: it must be the beauteous La Ferronniere —true to her rendezvous. Well, if this weather cannot cool man's ardour and woman's vanity, drowning never would!

PARD. Only think! the gentle, delicate, lady Ferronniere, whose footsteps would not crumple a rose-leaf, stepping out like a trooper, through such a night, on a love adventure!

CHAB. Still I am uneasy about the king—the illfame of that house ——

PARD. His majesty is armed to the very teeth; and with his trusty blade, he'd dare a host of devils who should interpose between him and a dainty damsel.

CHAB. Still this fearful neighbourhood is well calculated to excite apprehension.

PARD. Some one draws nigh. Who comes there?

Enter TRIBOULET.

TRIB. A friend.

PARD. The word?

TRIB. France and Valois.

CHAB. As I live, it is the knave Triboulet! What brings thee here, my merry gossip, this dark and cut-throat night?

TRIB. To study the planets, practise astrology, watch the conjunction of Mars and Venus, and see who bears the ascendant in the firmament.

CHAB. I fancy the lady moon has more influence on thy poor brain than yon twinkling stars, that scarce can peep through the inky clouds. (*Thunder-storm.*)

PARD. My lord, the storm increases; and since we are not lovers, methinks we had better seek shelter in yon tower, where we shall yet be within his majesty's call.

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TRIB. So gentlemen—handsome gentlemen—his majesty has also crossed the water to read the heavens. They are a black-letter book, believe me; I wonder if he cunningly cast his own nativity ere he came out?

CHAB. Come, good fool; a blazing hearth will ease thy crooked bones from the sharp keenness of the north-east wind; forsooth gentlemen, we'll keep our watch under cover since the king is safely housed. Come Triboulet.

TRIB. Thank you, my lord, the earth shall be my pillow, the sky my canopy. I've had a burning fever all the day, and want a refreshing night.

CHAB. Well, I thought thee both knave and fool, but now thou art truly mad; good night.—(*Exit with* PARD. *into Tower.*)

TRIB. They are gone; rest my trusty gentlemen, and refresh yourselves to pay your morning's obeisance to your master. I ween you can swim, good sirs, for you must dive deep to find him.—(*Listens at the Inn-door.*)—All is still. (*Thunder.*)—Interrupt me not ye harbingers of revenge, and let me hear my victim's groan.—(*Listen.*)—All is quiet, quiet, quiet. Can I be betrayed? No, no, no! for I still hold my money. Stop! methought I heard a heavy fall. No, tis but the wind. What if I was deceived? Gold! gold! hast thou lost thy power? No, no, it cannot be; the late discovered mines of Mexico are avenues of hell, to lead men to destruction. Some one approaches; the steps are slow and cautious! Oh how my heart beats in pleasurable expectation. Good Melchior! kind Bohemian! let thy blows strike home; give me the wished for signal—let thy shrill whistle silence the very winds, and prove a joy-bell to my soul.—(*Melchior whistles.*)—'Tis done! 'tis done! ha! ha! ha!

SENTINEL. (*Without.*) Who comes there?

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TRIB. France and Valois.

SENTINEL. All's well.

TRIB. Yes, it is Valois. (*Aside.*) (*Enter Melchior, carrying a corpse, wrapped in a mantle, from house.*) Ha! Melchior, my friend! my kinsman! where is my prey?

MEL. Hush! here, here! but the provost is abroad—help me to cast it into the river.

TRIB. (*Ferociously.*) Do'st think, sirrah, I'd leave to thee the funereal pomp? No, give me my prey!

MEL. Tush man! I tell thee—assist me with it; thou hast not strength alone to bear the weight.

TRIB. Not strength to carry such a precious burthen? Nature has arched these bandied limbs to give a giant's power to my revenge!— (*Takes the mantle from Melchior and lays it on the ground.*)

MEL. Well, good fool—follow thy fancy—my money—I have no time to lose.

TRIB. (*Giving the purse and chain.*) Here and here, would I had a diadem to reward thee.

MEL. And now my safeguard.

TRIB. There is thy pass—signed by the Chancellor himself—flee—while it is time!

MEL. Farewell, good Triboulet! but, believe me, get rid of thy burthen as soon as thou canst, or, to-morrow the gallows put up for me will creak under thy jingling bones. (*Exit into house, and returns instantly with* ZEPPO *and* RODOLPH,—*they Exeunt, looking triumphantly on the mantle.*) Hail! all hail! Francis the First—my most gracious sovereign! king of France!—Duke of Milan! Conqueror of Merignan—nations trembled at thy nod, the country groaned to defray the splendour of thy court and sighed for the glory of thy smiles; now bid thy banner fly; thy trumpets sound!—now tell thy

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base minions to bring to thee thy abject subject's wives and sisters and daughters—aye! even thy poor fool's only child! —all he had left on earth—all he adored—without whom day was as dark as night, and night a constant vigil of misery. Kings wage wars—so can their fools—now Valois is defeated, and Triboulet his jester is crowned with laurels! and, if perchance this heap of regal corruption is dragged up from the river's bed by some weary fisherman—instead of thy dreaded sceptre—the bauble of thy jester shall grace thy monumental statute. (ZERLINA *and* FRANCIS *enter from the house.*)

FRAN. Adieu, good gipsey—this kind office shall not go unrewarded. (ZERLINA *Exits.*)

TRIB. (*Struck with horror.*) Ha! that voice, (*with a loud yell*) who comes there?

FRAN. France and Valois. (*Lightning.*)

TRIB. The king's alive! I'm robbed! murdered!—I'm —unrevenged!—who—what are you?—speak—kill me with a word—a touch—or, save me from dissolving into air, if thou art an apparition!

FRAN. Why, honest Triboulet, what brings you here at this lone hour?

TRIB. To send thee to the infernal regions and avenge my wrongs.

FRAN. The man's mad—prithee, what hast thou there?

TRIB. I gloried in the thought it was thy corpse; but now must find by whom I have been thus basely—cruelly deceived. (*kneels and opens mantle.*) Ha! methinks it is a woman—this long and flowing hair. (*thunder.*) Light—light—in mercy's name! will not the angry heavens grant me one single flash of fire to illumine this horrid mystery (*Lightning.*) It is a woman! a beauteous woman! male-

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diction! it cannot—it must not be my Blanch—my own—my life.

FRAN. Horror! Hollo, my guards—light!

Enter CHABANNES. PARDILLIAN, *and archers, with torches.*

TRIB. (*Discovers his daughter's features.*) It is—it is my own—my child—now Francis glut thy savage eyes upon thy victim! my poor—my sweetest daughter!—oh! she's still warm! thy life still lingers on this wretched earth 'ere thou art cold for ever! King art thou satisfied?

FRAN. Desperate madman! thy ill-fated daughter was as innocent (so help me guardian saints!) as any cherub she has flown to meet.

TRIB. Innocent! and one night in thy palace!

FRAN. But whence comes this murdered angel? (TRIBOULET *points to the inn.*) Haste and bring forth the gypsey maid that dwells there (PERDILLIAN *goes off and returns with* ZERLINA.) that we may trace this horrid, horrid crime! Come forth good Bohemian—nay tremble not—thou hast saved the life of thy sovereign.

ZER. (*Kneeling.*) My sovereign!

FRAN. Yes, excellent girl! Tell me Zerlina, (for thou could'st not beguile the truth,) how came this fair victim to be thus basely slaughtered?

ZER. Alas, my liege! it is a horrid tale; that very mantle was to have shrouded your gracious majesty; fearing you were not fast asleep, the assassins dared not approach you, and then decided, that to earn the recompence of their work, if chance brought in some wretched traveller, he should be sacrificed for the reward; this young man came—you know the rest.

FRAN. Poor, poor victim! what could have brought her to thy dwelling?

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ZER. I know not, sire; but as she fell, I heard her exclaim, "Thank Heaven I have saved my benefactor!"

Enter DE BERCY *hastily.*

DE BER. Where—where is the king?

FRAN. Here: what brings you thus close upon our footsteps.

DE BER. Sad tidings from your majesty's camp at Valentia; the Dauphin—

FRAN. What of my boy, my dearest son?

DE BER. Alas! he is no more! basely poisoned by Sebastian Montecuculi.

FRAN. My son! my hope! my all—

TRIB. (*Who has been absorbed in thought, and gazing on his child.*) Has joined my daughter. (*Bell.*) Hark! (*Bell.*) Hark! the bell of Notre Dame!—the old man's curse! King! both are smitten! (*With exultation.*) Francis the First and Triboulet are childless.

(*He casts himself on his daughter's corpse—the king sinks* (*in the arms of* CHABANNES *and attendants.*

THE END.

BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON,
JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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5

FRA-DIAVOLO;

OR,

THE INN OF TERRACINA:

A COMIC OPERA.

IN THREE ACTS.

COMPOSED BY AUBER.

WRITTEN, AND THE MUSIC ADAPTED

BY

M. ROPHINO LACY,

AUTHOR OF

"THE MAID OF JUDAH," "CINDERELLA," "LOVE AND REASON," "THE TWO FRIENDS," "LOVE IN WRINKLES," "FIEND FATHER," "ISRAELITES IN EGYPT," &c.

PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

LONDON:

JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

(Agent to the Dramatic Authors' Society.)

1833.

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LONDON:
BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON,
JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Fra Diavolo, disguised as the Marquis of San Carlo	Mr. Braham	Mr. Wilson.
Lord Allcash.....	Mr. Penson.	Mr. Durusset.
Lorenzo.....	Mr. Wilson.	M. J. Bennett.
Matteo	Mr. Morley.	
Beppo	Mr. G. Stansbury.	
Giacomo.....	Mr. Reynoldson.	Mr. Ransford.
Francesco	Mr. Sutton.	
Farina	Mr. Miller.	
1*st Carbinier*.....	Mr. Henry.	
2*d Carbinier*	Mr. Mears.	
3*d Carbinier*	Mr. Hodges.	

Carbiniers, Villagers, Peasants, Servants of the Inn, &c.

WOMEN.

Lady Allcash.....	Miss Cawse.	Miss Inverarity.
Zerlina	Miss Romer.	

Female Villagers and Peasants.

The Scene passes at the Inn of Terracina, near Naples.

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FRA-DIAVOLO;

OR,

THE INN OF TERRACINA.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

The entrance-porch of an Italian Inn. The rear, sustained by several Pillars entwined with verdure, opens on a gay romantic Landscape. On the right and left, side-doors leading into the Interior. Towards the front, (L. H.) *a Table, round which are discovered drinking several Carbiniers in the Italian light-horse-uniform. Lorenzo stands apart without partaking in their mirth.*

INTRODUCTORY CHORUS.

Drink! for, joy bestowing,
Around the wine is flowing!
Wine's the soldier's shield
In the tended field;
From all fear it guards him,
And with fame rewards him!
Glory's path while bravely pursuing,
Love and wine his toils repay;
Danger's approach he smiles as he's viewing,
Love and wine can all his pains allay!
What, ho!—more wine!—we must be gay
Drink!—&c. &c.

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1st CARB. One health more, comrades.—Here's——"To our speedy capture of Fra-Diavolo!

ALL. Huzza! (*they drink.*)

2d CARB. He's most aptly christened after his patron saint!—It's a sure thing his dingy majesty of the lower regions never had a more hopeful recruit.

3d CARB. He's the very King of Banditti.

1st CARB. If we are lucky enough to lay hold on him, Signor Lorenzo, it seems that our reward is to be———

LOREN. Six thousand ducats.

ALL. Six thousand!—

LOREN. Nothing less.

ALL. Huzza!

1st CARB: He's the best prize in all Italy! (*rising*) March us on, captain, in pursuit of the valuable villain.—But, stay—suppose, comrades, we empty another jug to our success?

ALL. Right,—another jug; another jug:—Ho! Landlord! Matteo! House!—(*calling noisily and knocking the table.*)

(*Enter* MATTEO *with more wine from the house.* ZERLINA *steals in after him, and, unperceived, hides herself behind one of the pillars.*)

MATT. Here, gentlemen! here.—I anticipate your wishes.—Do you find money, I'll find you drink.—(*Looking into the empty jugs on the table.*) Bravo!—By Bacchus, there's no thirst like a soldier's.—But, Master Lorenzo, since you stand treat, why don't you take a glass along with them?

LOREN. Not I.—Drink on, comrades;—never heed *me.*

1st CARB. (*In a half voice to his companions.*) Our captain is plaguey melancholy!—What is it ails him?

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MATT. (*Aside.*) I know well enough what ails him, poor fellow! But I can't help it,—I must do my duty.—(*To the soldiers.*) Gentlemen, since you are naturally fond of merry doings,—good eating and immoderate—I mean moderate drinking, I think you will have no objection to my present invitation. To-morrow, I marry my daughter Zerlina to Francesco Veroni the rich young farmer of the next village.—You must be present at the wedding.—I invite you all.

LOREN. (*Aside with strong emotion.*) I'll sooner die than behold the cursed moment!

CARB. Wine! more wine!

MATT. What! already?—Bless their swallow! There'll be not a drop left for the wedding!—Well, well,—I'll go fetch one jug more, and rare wine you'll find it, I warrant; for I may boldly say, there's nobody in these parts sells such stuff as I do. (*Exit, carrying with him the empty vessels.*)

ZERL. (*Coming down* R. H. *of* LORENZO.) Lorenzo! are you going to leave us?

LOREN. Yes, Zerlina.—I must to the mountains, and destroy the horde of bandits that infest them. May I never return, but having discharged a soldier's duty, find a soldier's grave!

ZERL. Lorenzo!

LOREN. You are going to become the wife of another;—'tis your father's command.—I am too poor to obtain you,—what have I to wish for but death?

ZERL. I am not yet another's, Lorenzo,—and if fortune—

LOREN. No more. Delude me not with a hope which it would be folly to indulge.

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SONG, (LORENZO.)

Vainly, alas! thou'dst soothe the pangs I feel;—
Fond love betray'd what hope can restore?
Death, Death alone my grief may heal;—
Farewell!—perhaps for evermore!

Wealth I have none, thy father's only care,
Therefore I lose all on earth I adore;
My only wealth is the love to thee I bear;—
Farewell!—perhaps for evermore!

Tho' thou forsak'st me I still will faithful prove,
Still on thy head ev'ry bliss I'll implore:
Hence duty calls me. My first, my only love—
Farewell!—perhaps for evermore!

(*He retires to the soldiers.*)

1st. CARB. Honoured Captain, take but one cup with us; it will be an omen of our success.

LOREN. (*Snatching up a cup.*) Come! Victory or Death.

ALL. (*Starting up.*) Victory or Death!

MATTEO (*putting out his head.*)

MATT. Bravo, gentlemen.—I beg to be allowed to drink the toast also.—Victory to *you*, Death to *Fra-Diavolo!* (*He drinks.*)

(*A loud noise is suddenly heard without. All hasten to the top of the stage and look out, two or three of the Carbiniers go out and line the passage. The noise comes nearer, and Lord and Lady Allcash in the greatest agitation and alarm are seen hastily entering, down the declivity. The servants of the inn come out also.*)

CONCERTED PIECE.

LORD *and* LADY A. Give us help!—They're at hand!
We've escap'd the whole band!
LOREN. ZERL. MATT. CARBINIERS.
Why this noise?—What danger is near?
LORD A. Signor Brigadier?—

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LORENZO. What means your flight?
What alarms you thus, let me hear.
LORD A. I'm almost choak'd with rage!
LADY A. And I am dead with fright!

(LADY A. *has been conducted to a seat.* ZERLINA *hastens to her;* MATTEO *offers her a smelling bottle, &c. &c.* ZERLINA *brings her a glass of water on a plate from table.*

LORD A. (*Going to* LADY A. *with ludicrous tenderness.*)
Dearest angel!—Arabella!—Upon your love recline!
(*Turning to* LORENZO.)
She's my wife, sir,—and her nerves are delicately fine!

LADY A. (*rising up with langour and difficulty.*)
Oh! what a frightful land for strangers!
At ev'ry step assail'd by dangers
A daring robber's band
Plund'ring on ev'ry hand,
Now terror spreads o'er all the land!—
To Italy, France, or Spain,
I will never come again!
Of my richly furnish'd cases,
Of my diamonds, pearls, and laces,
Where, alas! are now the traces?
All's the prey of a wild Brigand!
'Tis enough, my Lord, to grieve me,
And my fate I must deplore;—
Let us home, and thence, believe me
I will never travel more!

LORD *and* LADY A.
No, No, I will no longer stay
Where constant dangers thus arise!
No, No, No, No,—we'll go away!
Experience ought to make us wise!

LORENZO *and* CARBINIERS.
The bandit chieftain, as they say,
Conceal'd near yonder mountains lies!
On then, without delay,
To gain the sought-for prize.

ZERLINA *and* MATTEO.
I tremble, if they truly say
The bandit near our mountain lies!
Spreading around dismay,
He ev'ry danger defies.

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LORD A. (*to* LORENZO.) Signor Brigadier, I summon you in the name of justice, to take cognizance of this shocking, positively shocking outrage.

LOREN. I am ready to hear you, Sir, and willing to redress you.

LORD A. I have the honour, I must premise to you, of being an English nobleman making the tour of Italy with my lady here, for divers reasons. Firstly, because it's fashionable to spend our money from home; secondly, because, being newly married, I didn't well know what to do; and thirdly, because hearing so much about Italy and your volcanoes, I thought we should find something pretty and entertaining to look at; but, Signor Brigadier, your country is shocking, positively shocking!

LOREN. I am sorry, my Lord, that—

LORD A. Oh, so am I! very sorry; very sorry I ever came into it, and shall be very glad to get safe out of it, which isn't very easy, considering one runs the risk every hour of having one's throat cut in it. It's scarcely a mile off that our postillion was stopped.

LADY A. Yes, by a band of robbers.

LOREN. Which road did they come?

LORD A. Why, that I can't exactly say; for when they attacked the carriage I was fast asleep, by the side of my wife.

LADY A. Yes, and I must say, my Lord, you do little *else* now than sleep; you've got quite a habit of it; and I'm sure, as I often tell you, something or another will happen to you in consequence.

LOREN. And what did the banditti rob you of?

LORD A. All they could get. They rummaged my carriage from top to bottom—searched every corner—felt me

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all over, and turned out my pockets; then they felt my Lady all over, and—

LADY A. Yes, and took from me all my sweet diamonds.

LORD A. The richest jewels you ever saw.

LADY A. And so becoming!

LORD A. True, my dear; I shall never fancy you half so beautiful without them.

LOREN. 'Tis the band we're in pursuit of—that of Fra-Diavolo. Which way did they disappear?

LORD A. They vanished towards the mountains, along with our diamonds.

LOREN. Come, gentlemen, forward! The stirrup-cup, and to horse!

(MATTEO, *assisted by the servants, pours out drink for the soldiers.*)

ZERL. (*Approaching* LORENZO, *and in an under voice.*) Lorenzo, this dreaded robber—so fierce—so desperate! Should any misfortune befal you—

LOREN. There *was* a time I cared for life, but now—

ZERL. Lorenzo!

LOREN. To-morrow makes you another's; your duty to your father has conquered your love for *me*. I'll not upbraid you for it. Farewell! be happy, and bestow now and then a thought on me, when I shall be no more.

ZERL. (*Agitated.*) You will live—you will live. I will breathe unceasing prayers to Heaven for your safety!

LOREN. Prayers! yes—pray that to-morrow it be not in my power to behold your marriage.

ZERL. What mean you?

LOREN. (*Wiping away a tear.*) Come! come! duty before all. My Lord, I look to bring you back fair tidings. Fare you well, father Matteo! Farewell, Zerlina!

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(*To his soldiers.*) March!—(MUSIC.—*Exit* LORENZO *with his party up the declivity.*)

LORD A. The Signor Brigadier seems very agitated about the business. This diabolical Fra-Diavolo frightens everybody.

MATT. You are under a mistake, my Lord. Brigadier Lorenzo is a stranger to fear: his heart is Roman. He has, young as he is, seen much active service, and the brave fellow has only one fault.

LORD A. And what is that?

MATT. He is in love, and has no fortune but his military pay, and gun-shots in perspective.

LORD A. Shocking! positively shocking!

MATT. Why, it *is* but a poor income, indeed. Had it been otherwise with him, I shouldn't have wished for a better or a kinder hearted—(*looking at his daughter*)—but prudence and reason must be minded. Come, Zerlina! clear away those bottles and glasses.

(*The men servants of the inn take away the things.*)

LORD A. (*Aside.*) I'll try if I can't inspire the people hereabouts with a little courage, by means of my purse. Here, good Master Host! please to draw me out a little advertisement, and post it up every where, offering a reward to whomsoever shall restore to us the property we have lost.

MATT. Most willingly, Signor.

(MATTEO *sits down at the table, from the drawer of which he pulls out pen, ink, and paper, and begins writing, while* LORD A. *seems to dictate to him.*)

LADY A. (*Addressing* ZERLINA, *who is sitting disconsolate in a corner.*) What! crying, Miss Zerlina? Come, tell me your sorrow.

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ZERL. (*Rising and drying her eyes.*) Mine, Madam! I have none.

LADY A. Yes, yes, you have. Ah! you can't easily deceive me in those matters. (*Archly.*) I saw a certain young Brigadier as he went away cast a certain look at a certain pretty girl, that said plain enough "Zerlina! how I love you!"

ZERL. (*Confused and alarmed.*) Madam.

LADY A. Well, child! and where's the harm? I like to see those things. True tenderness is so captivating! My Lord and I are an example. We married for love, and a love-match is such a sweet thing!—(*Simpering tenderly to* LORD A.)—Isn't it, my Lord?—(*Seeing that he does'nt answer—angrily.*)—My Lord!

LORD A. (*Busy at the table with Matteo.*) Zounds! you see I'm occupied, and you *will* plague me!—I'm drawing up a proclamation, offering a reward.—(*To Matteo.*) You have put down that I promise to give three hundred ducats?

LADY A. Three hundred? It isn't half enough, my Lord. (*To Matteo.*) Put down, Sir, one *thousand*, ducats. My case of diamonds was well worth *twenty* thousand, and its being lost is nobody's fault, my Lord, but your's. You *would* take the bye-road across the country.

LORD A. I had my reasons for that, Lady A. I was determined to get rid of that over-gallant cavalier, who, these few days past, has seemed bent upon following us everywhere, intruding himself on our notice, and even stopping at the same inns.

LADY A. I couldn't help the man's travelling the same road, could I?

LORD A. But you might have helped *looking* at the man,

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couldn't you? And you might also, I think, have helped, yesterday evening, talking with him, and singing that eternal *barcarole*, which I detest from my very soul.

LADY A. He was only trying to teach it me.

(*When Matteo has finished writing out a couple of copies, Zerlina takes them from him, with some wafers, and fixes them up conspicuously on two of the pillars, inside and out; Matteo posts up the other two, and they both keep pacing backwards and forwards during the ensuing duet between Lord and Lady A.*)

LORD A. I won't have any man teach you anything. You know quite enough already, without extending your knowledge by foreign instructions.

LADY A. (*Pettishly.*) I suppose, my Lord, it's a crime to indulge in a little innocent music?

LORD A. You are never anxious to indulge in a little innocent music with *me*.

LADY A. Your Lordship has spoilt my taste for *matrimonial* duets by their monotony. But I trust I may be permitted a little harmless singing and playing, whenever I please.

LORD A. I have no particular objection to your playing *music*, but I certainly have to your playing the *coquette*, as you did with that forward, impudent Marquis, who ——

LADY A. I the coquette?

LORD A. Yes, my Lady, you. I saw it plain enough. It was shocking! positively shocking! and I here formally declare that I won't have any more such doings.

LADY A. You won't?

LORD A. That is, I don't exactly say I won't—but I—I— I *won't*, and there 's an end!

LADY A. My Lord! my Lord ——

LORD A. My Lady! my Lady—once for all, let us understand each other.

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DUET.

LORD A. I don't object, I don't object
To see you ever pleased and gay;
And while gallants around you play
That you your husband should neglect,—
I don't object, I don't object,—
But, 'sdeath! to meet, where'er I go,
An impudent, annoying *beau*,
Whose evil motives I suspect—
I *do* object, I do object,—
Oh yes, to that I do object.

I don't object, I don't object
To pay for trinkets without end;—
Nay, my whole fortune to expend
To see you fashionably deck'd—
I dont object, I don't object;
But to your seeking to make *me*
One of those husbands whom we see
Forming so *numerous* a sect—
I *do* object, I do object,—
Oh yes, to that I do object.

LADY A. I don't object, I don't object
To be precise, and not coquet;
And not to run you more in debt
Than you in reason can expect—
I don't object, I don't object;—
But that a husband should presume
The *tyrant* ever to assume,
And dare to lecture and correct—
I *do* object, I do object—
Oh yes, to that I do object.

LORD A. You may object as much as ever you please; but let me tell you, for all that, Madam, that you shall never again see this Neapolitan Marquis—this persevering Cicisbeo, who has hitherto pursued us like our shadow, with an insolence, to say the least of it, shocking—positively shocking!

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MATT. Hark! It's the noise of a carriage. (*Running to look out.*) Yes, it's a landau stopping at my door. (*Rubbing his hands.*) Delightful! Some great Signor coming to stay at my house! What an honour! Here he is!

(*Enter the* MARQUIS—*over his dress a rich blue cloak which he wears open, and in his hand a military hat with a white feather border. (The servants come out also from inn.)*

LORD A. What do I see?—Curse me but it's he again!

LADY A. The Marquis!

MARQ. How!—my charming foreigner!

QUINTETT.

MARQUIS (*Aside.*)
Oh! rapture unbounded!
Indulgent fate new bliss prepares!
My hopes are well founded;—
My joy her bosom shares.

LADY A. (*Aside.*)
With wonder I'm astounded!
To trace our steps he boldly dares!
My doubts are well-founded;
My beauty his heart ensnares.

LORD A. (*Aside.*)
With wonder I'm astounded!
Upon my wife see how he stares!
My fears are well-founded!
To brave me still he dares!

ZERLINA *and* MATTEO (*Aside.*)
With wonder they're astounded!
What joy the Marquis' look declares;
My doubts are well-founded;
This fair one's chains he wears.

MATT. (*To* ZERLINA.) Run and our noble guest attend!

(*One of the servants comes forward and receives the Marquis's cloak, and* ZERLINA *takes his hat which she gives the other servant.)*

MARQ. There's no haste.—I'll make some delay.

(*They go off while the other two begin to cover the table.*)

I've travell'd far, so I intend
Until to-morrow here to stay.

LORD A. (*To his wife.*) There! There!—You hear?
The case is clear!
No further now he means to go—
'Tis all on *your* account I know.

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MARQUIS (*Aside.*)
Hope, with cheering beam,
Now smiles on my scheme;
While love and fortune seem
Both kind also to prove!

LADY A. (*Aside.*)
Who can thoughts confine?
He thinks me divine!
'Tis sure no fault of mine!
If with me he's in love!

ZER. (*Aside.*) Yes, from out his eyes
Love's flame brightly flies!
To hear his tender sighs
Her heart fain would he move.

(*Together.*)

My { hopes / doubts / fears } are well founded.

(*At the end of the above Quintett,* LORD A. *forces his wife into the inn. She curtseys to the Marquis as she goes out. A little before, two of the servants of the inn have laid a cloth, wine, fruit, and bread upon the table, at which the* MARQUIS *sits down when the quintett is finished.*)

MATT. (*Left hand of the table with a towel in his hand*) Come, Zerlina, be smart and stir about. Wait upon my noble lord, the Marquis. (*One of the two servants presents* ZERLINA *with a plate, and a folded napkin on it, to wait upon the guest.*) I hope, signor, that you will be satisfied with the attention of my people and of my daughter here, whom I must leave mistress of the house, as I am obliged to absent myself from it for the night.

MARQ. Ah! you leave home, landlord? (*pouring out a glass, &c. and beginning to eat.*)

MATT. Yes, your signory, almost directly. I am going to sleep two leagues off at the farm of my son-in-law, that is to be,—young *Francesco Veroni,* whom I shall bring here to-morrow with the whole wedding party.

ZERL. (*Aside.*) Lorenzo!

MATT. We shall have a merry time of it; for to-morrow

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is the greatest holiday we have; Easter Sunday; and who weds on that day, they say, has less to repent of than upon any other.

MARQ. (*Continuing to eat.*) Have you many in your inn just now?

MATT. Only yourself, signor, and the outlandish gentleman and lady you beheld just now.

MARQ. No others?—(*After a moment's reflection.*) The lady is handsome,—but the lord, her husband, seems, somewhat sour-tempered.

ZERL. That's not to be wondered at, signor; he has been attacked and rifled by the bandits of the mountains.

MARQ. (*Eating all the time.*) Can't be!—I've no faith in robbers.

MATT. *I have,* though; as much faith as is in our Lady of the Green Palms, our holy patroness. (*Signing himself with the cross.*)

MARQ. Mere stories to fright travellers. I have passed the mountains by day and by night, and *I* have never been attacked.

MATT. Like enough, *formerly;* but ever since Fra Diavolo has fixed his infernal quarters in the neighbourhood—

MARQ. Fra Diavolo!—Why who's he?

ZERL. How! Have you never heard of him, signor?

MATT. Not heard of Fra Diavolo?

ZERL. He's a famous robber.

MATT. Who is everywhere at once!

ZERL. And whom nobody can come up with!

MATT. He wears an *amulet* about him, which he stole from a Cardinal, and which renders him invisible!

MARQ. Only think of that!

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ZERL. And the balls shot against him rebound from his skin!

MARQ. Is it possible!

ZERL. Oh, it's true, signor! His daring adventures would fill up a hundred books, and as the song says—

MARQ. What! there's a song too about him, is there?

MATT. Oh, a famous one;—all in honour of him—twenty-two stanzas.

MARQ. How many?

MATT. Twenty-two. If my lord would like during his repast, to hear—

MARQ. Is one obliged to hear the whole of it?

MATT. That's just as people choose; nobody is forced.

MARQ. Oh, well! Come then, let's hear it.

MATT. *(Detaching a mandoline from the wall, and handing it to his daughter.)* Here girl!

ZERL. *(Declining it, and laying it by her on the corner of the table.)* Thanks, Father! I can sing it very well without.

SONG.

On yonder rock reclining,
That fierce and swarthy form behold!
Fast his hands his carbine hold;
'Tis his best friend of old.
This way his steps inclining,
His scarlet plume o'ershades his brow,
And his velvet cloak hangs low,
Playing in graceful flow.
Tremble!—E'en while the storm is beating,—
Hear echo afar repeating—
Diavolo! Diavolo! Diavolo!

Altho' his foes waylaying,
He fights with rage and hate combin'd;
Tow'rds the gentle fair, they find
He's ever mild and kind.
The maid too heedless straying,

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(For one, we Pietro's daughter know),
Home returns full sad and slow;
What car have made her so?
Tremble!—Each one the maiden meeting,
Is sure to be repeating—
Diavolo! Diavolo! Diavolo!

MARQ. *(Rising suddenly, and singing the concluding verse:)*

While thus his deeds accusing,
Let justice too, at least be shown,—
All that's lost here let us own,
Mayn't be *his* prize alone.
Full oft his name abusing,
Perchance some young and rustic beau,
Whilst his hopes with conquest glow,
At beauty's shrine bows low.
Tremble!—Each sighing lover dread,
For of *him* more truly may be said—
Diavolo! Diavolo! Diavolo!

(*At the conclusion of the song, the* MARQUIS *retakes his seat at the table, and* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO *appear from* L. H. *at the centre pillars at the top of the stage, their cloaks about them.*)

ZERL. *(Perceiving them, and with sudden alarm.)* Ha! who are these men?

MATT. How now? What seek ye here?

BEP. *(Advancing on the* L. H. *of* ZERLINA, *with* GIACOMO *at his left, very humbly.)* Hospitality for the night.

GIAC. In the name of our Lady of the Green Palms.

MATT. Go to the devil! D'ye think it's our custom to shelter beggars and vagabonds?

BEP. We are poor pilgrims.

ZERL. (*Interceding.*) Dear father, should they speak the truth—

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MATT. Pooh, nonsense, girl! Pilgrims drest in that manner?

BEP. We are on our pilgrimage to fulfil a vow.

MATT. What vow?

GIAC. That of making our fortune.

MATT. Carry your ill-looking faces further then, for you certainly won't make it here.

MARQ. (*Rising, and opening his purse from which he takes out a few pieces.*) Who knows? perhaps they may. Here, honest friends, take ye this. I bestow my alms upon you in the name of this fair creature.

BEP. *and* GIAC. (*Taking the money and inclining themselves.*) Oh! noble Marquis!

MATT. How!—Why, noble Signor, they *know* you!

MARQ. Yes,—they're a couple of poor devils whom I met on the road this morning, and whom I've already relieved once. Master landlord, to finish my work of charity, I will pay for their supper and beds.

MATT. It will be a crown ahead.

MARQ. Ahead! that's more than *both* their heads are worth, perhaps;—but no matter. There, my host.

MATT. (*Receiving the money.*) Since my Lord Marquis condescends to favour them, they need no other recommendation.

ZERL. Father, shall they be lodged in the loft. (*pointing* R. H.)

MATT. Not in the house;—no, no;—particularly as I shall be out of it. Here, Roberto! give them a slice of something to eat, and afterwards, shew them yourself into the barn there, close by. (*To the other servants.*) The rest of ye, go in and get ready the supper for the English Lord and his Lady. (*Exeunt Servants.*) (*To* ZERLINA.) You my child, shall come with me a part of my road as far as the

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Hermitage, and we will chat a little about your bride-groom. I have the honour to take my leave, Signor Marquis. I hope when I return to-morrow morning with my new son-in-law that I shall find your Signory still here.

MARQ. I hope so too; I rise very late.—Farewell, good host! A pleasant journey to you.—Adieu, my pretty dear. (ZERLINA, *when addressed by her father, has gone and taken down his hat from the wall, and presented it to him along with his cane. She then gives him her arm, and exit with him.*)

(*The* MARQUIS *has sat down at the corner of the table, using his tooth-pick,* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO *look cautiously around to see if all are gone, and then approach the table, one on the left-hand, the other on the right.*)

BEP. (*Taking up the bottle and pouring himself out a glass of wine.*) Here's your health. (*To the* MARQUIS.)

MARQ. (*With haughty surprise.*) What?

BEP. I say your health.

MARQ. What means this impertinence? (*Taking up the mandoline and aiming a blow at him, he escapes it, leaving the wine undrunk.*

GIAC. (*Taking off his hat.*) Excuse him, Captain; he's a raw recruit who doesn't yet know the respect due to you. (*in a low voice to* BEPPO *behind.*) Why don't you take off your hat? (BEPPO *takes it off.*) He's not yet quite up in our ways, but he's of excellent promise, and sure to do honour to his profession with a little practice. He was a *steward* lately in a great house, but he's now determined to act like a brave fellow, and rob *openly*.

MARQ. Yes, but it's not enough to be brave alone, 'tis necessary to have some manners, and a little knowledge of life. There certainly never was seen, in its beginning, a more rude and disorderly troop than that which I have the

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honour to command! The most ill-bred rascals that ever ——(*Rising, and taking the stage to right-hand.*) If I hadn't introduced among them a little order and discipline! (*To* GIACOMO, *pointing to a decanter on the table, and turning up his sleeves.*) Some water! (GIACOMO *instantly pours the water over the* MARQUIS'S *hands as he holds them over a water-glass.*) I'll tell your what, my facetious friend.—(*To* BEPPO *whilst washing his hands*)—the first familiarity you honour me with,—I'll blow your brains out; that will be a lesson to you.

BEP. How!—a pretty lesson indeed! Blow my——

GIAC. (*Putting back the water on the table.*) He'll do it as sure as you live.

BEP. (*frightened.*) Hey!

MARQ. A towel!—(BEPPO *hastens to give it him; the* MARQUIS *dries his hands, and throws it on the table; taking the stage again to right-hand.*) What news is there, and what brings ye here?

BEP. (*With his hat off.*) Our enterprise has succeeded. We've stopped the English my Lord, and his diamonds.

MARQ. Think ye I'm ignorant of that?—I know it well enough.

GIAC. All the informations you gave us, Captain, have proved exact to the letter.

MARQ. I believe ye. It's now three days that I've been following their steps, watching their movements, dining with them in the same inns, and every evening singing *Barcaroles* with my lady. You think, I suppose, there's no labour in all that.

GIAC. We know well enough, noble Captain, all that you do for us.

MARQ. Then be grateful, ye hounds, and above all, *obedient*.

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But tell me, didn't my lord defend himself, and haven't we lost some of our people?

GIAC. No, Captain; on the contrary, we've gained a brother. The postillion turns out to be an old comrade, who quitted us, and who now asks to enlist with us afresh.

MARQ. Ha! he quitted us, did he?

GIAC. Yes, Captain.

MARQ. Is he in your hands?

GIAC. He is.

MARQ. (*Coolly, settling his neckcloth in a pocket-glass.*) Let him be shot. I don't like inconstancy—I mean in our profession; towards the *fair*—that's quite another thing; and since, thanks to my Lord, we are rich in diamonds, let a set of the brightest be sent to Fiorina, the young opera-singer under my protection. I love to patronize the fine arts, and particularly music.

GIAC. It shall be done, Captain.

MARQ. Well! haven't you told me all?

GIAC. No, truly, Captain; and we're very much afraid that we've been taken in.

MARQ. Ay, ay! Pray how is that?

GIAC. The money-box which you informed us of, and which we were to find in the Lord's carriage—

MARQ. (*Anxiously.*) Twenty thousand gold pieces, which he was going to bank at Leghorn—at least so his lady told me. Well?

GIAC. (*Shrugging up his shoulders.*) Impossible to find them.

MARQ. Idiots! to miss such a glorious prize.

BEP. Perhaps he spent them o' purpose to cheat us.

GIAC. Very like; there's nothing but meanness and

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roguery in the world. Common honesty has no followers.

BEP. People now-a-days never think of parting with their money handsomely: you must *take* it from them nilly-willy!

MARQ. Silence, and begone! This it is not to do one's *own* affairs. But I'll find out, cost what it will, what has become of all that gold. I see I must have a few more duets with my Lady. What would these rascals do without me?—(*Looking at the door of the Inn, which ust then opens.*)—Ha! by Fortune's smiles, 'tis she!—(*Perceiving* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO *loitering at the top of the stage.*)—How now! an't ye gone?—(*They disappear.*)

Enter LADY A. *from the Inn.*

LADY A. (*Coming in gently.*) My Lord has fallen asleep in his arm chair, and the evening air is so inviting—

MARQ. (*Advancing.*) Charming lady!

LADY A. (*Alarmed and retreating.*) Ha! you here still, Signor? My husband is only in the next room. He's fast asleep; but he's of such a jealous disposition. Oh! he's a perfect Othello; and if he should wake and see us together—

MARQ. He cannot surely feel offended at our devoting a few harmless moments to the enjoyment of a little music. It has been these few happy evenings past—happy at least, to *me*—our favourite pastime. Your gentle heart delights in harmony—so does mine. See—this mandoline that courts our notice, seems to invite our skill.—(*Taking up the mandoline, which Zerlina had placed on the corner of the table.*)—Come—let us repeat the barcarole which we began yesternight.

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LADY A. (*Looking towards the door.*) Ah! I hear him! He's coming!

MARQ. (*Hastily snatching up the mandoline, and beginning the*

BARCAROLE.

The Gondolier, fond passion's slave,
Will, for his love, each danger brave;
Winds and waves both disdain'd,
From his lady's bright eyes—(*looking at* LADY A.)
Be a glance but the prize,
It is still something gain'd!

The Gondolier, fond passion's slave,
Will, in his bark, each danger brave!
By each fear unrestrain'd,
From the lips of his fair
If a smile soothe his care,
It is still something——

(*Interrupting himself suddenly, he looks towards the door, and seeing that no one comes, he replaces the mandoline on the table, and passionately addresses* LADY A.)

MARQ. Ah, lovely stranger! must your heart remain ever insensible to the flame that devours mine?

LADY A. (*Trying to regain her chamber.*) Signor, I cannot listen—

MARQ. (*Retaining her.*) I am silent, Madam, you may remain. Surely to admire your perfections in silence cannot offend you?

LADY A. I cannot certainly help, nor hinder your admiring me, Signor.

MARQ. Ah, Madam! my soul is a slave to your unequalled charms. When I behold those soul-speaking features—that ravishing shape—the modest taste and simple elegance of that attire—the—(*His eyes suddenly rivetted by*

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admiration upon a rich gold locket, rimmed with diamonds, round LADY A.'s *neck, hanging loosely from a black ribband*) —the beautiful diamonds!

LADY A. What, these? Do you know, they're the only ones that escaped the robbers! I hid them with such care.

MARQ. (*Aside with vexation.*) Stupid rascals, what a pity! —(*Turning to* LADY A., *with a tone of gallantry.*)—Ah, Madam! what need of ornament hath beauty like your's? Yet, I confess, this is worthy of admiration—(*Taking it up in his hand.*)—and the more I look at it—does it not contain something?

LADY A. (*Smiling.*) Well guessed. You must know my husband had it made on purpose for himself, and it contains *my* portrait. (*Taking it off, opening it, and showing it to the Marquis.*) Do you think it like?

MARQ. (*With affected ecstacy.*) Heavens! Can it be? 'Tis nature's self! Yes, there are the soft and tender orbs that look but to enchant! The lovely features cast in the mould of perfect beauty! It moves—it speaks—it fills my soul with rapture! (*Changing to sudden rage.*) And shall a tyrant husband, a barbarian, a senseless *rival*, possess such a treasure? No! (*Putting the locket in his bosom.*) Never! never!

LADY A. (*Astonished.*) Sir! What is 't you do?

MARQ. I will keep it from his hands.

LADY A. (*Trying to regain it.*) But Sir ——

MARQ. I will never part with it!

LADY A. Signor, I request ———

MARQ. It shall remain for ever *close to my heart!* It is in vain to ask it from me. It is too valuable for me ever to give it up!

LADY A. Was there ev ——— Ha! here's my husband!

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(*The* MARQUIS *and* LADY *are close to the table, so that the* MARQUIS *can snatch up the mandoline at once.*)

(LORD A. *appears at the inn door, when the* MARQUIS, *hastily seizing the mandoline, continues the air of the Barcarolle.*)

MARQUIS.

The gondolier, fond passion's slave,
Will through the storm the billows brave,
By fond hope e'er sustain'd;
If at last to his breast
Her lov'd image is prest—(*Pressing the picture to his heart.*)
It is still something *gain'd!*

(LORD A., *after having listened awhile at the threshold, comes down between them.*)

TRIO.

LORD A. Bravi! bravi! bravi!
LADY A. Is 't you, my Lord?
LORD A. 'Tis I, you see.
LADY A. Did our music break your rest?
LORD A. (*Aside.*) The very name I detest!

LADY A. (*Aside.*)
By music I'm ever delighted!
Sweet charm of the mind!
Yet in music my husband
No pleasure can find;
So, we're never together
In harmony join'd!

LORD A. (*Aside.*)
Together they're ever united;
They're both of one mind!
To be pleas'd with their music
I'm little inclin'd;
We can ne'er be together
In harmony join'd.

(*The servants take in the tables quietly.*)

MARQUIS. (*Aside.*)

By music's sweet powers excited,
She's growing more kind!
With my Lord how to deal
Speedy means I must find;
For his wife and his gold
Both are much to my mind!

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LADY A. We were just going to try over the new Barcarole, my Lord.

LORD A. Very kind indeed of you, my Lady, whilst I was almost eaten up by a swarm of mosquitoes! Besides, I think I told you, before I fell asleep, to order me some refreshment.

MARQ. Well, my Lord, and surely, while you were having your refreshment, we might be having a little music.

LORD A. Yes, if I had *got* any refreshment;—but, zounds! I *had* none; and there was I waiting for it all the time—and I might have waited, I see, long enough!

MARQ. Nay, why didn't you say so before, my Lord? (*Calling.*) Within there! Some one!

LORD A. Oh! there's no occasion now; its not wanted; my thirst is all gone.

MARQ. (*With seeming concern.*) Doubtless, my Lord, the loss of your diamonds has taken it away.

LORD A. Yes, that, and—something else besides.

MARQ. You alarm me, my Lord! Has any misfortune happened to the twenty thousand pieces of gold which you were going to deposit at Leghorn?

LORD A. No, no,—the fates be praised, I have *them* still—safe enough.

MARQ. Ah! I breathe again. Do me the justice, my Lord, to appreciate my friendly anxiety; for I can assure you that, had you lost them, I should have been as seriously vexed at it as yourself.

LADY A. How kind you are!

MARQ. My only intention, in alluding to the money, was to make you a free offer of my pocket-book.

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LORD A. I thank you, Marquis—(*drawing out his pocket-book*) but I have already replenished my own.

MARQ. Well, I cannot conceive how you managed it! How in the world's name, my Lord, were you able to save your gold?

LORD A. By a little judicious contrivance, which I don't intend to tell anybody.

MARQ. You are certainly very clever, my Lord!

LORD A. I believe you.

LADY A. (*To the* MARQUIS.) He changed the gold for bank-bills, and afterwards had them sewed up.

MARQ. Sewed up! (*Anxiously.*) And where?

LORD A. (*Laughing.*) Ha! Ha! Ha! Guess, now!

MARQ. Oh! I am very bad at guessing.

LORD A. In my coat, and in my lady's gown! (*Touching her large sleeves at the shoulder.*)

MARQ. No! Is it possible? What! (*Crossing to* LADY A. *and examining her dress.*) Such a rich and precious treasure——(*Turning with a laugh to* LORD A.) Ha! Ha! Ha! Capital, I declare!

LORD A. (*Also laughing heartily.*) Wasn't it? Ha! Ha! Ha! Yes, yes,—my lady and I were positively lined with money!

MARQ. (*Aside.*) Thank you for the knowledge. (*Gains the* L. H.)

(*At this moment a warlike march is heard without.*)

COMMENCEMENT OF THE FINALE TO THE FIRST ACT.

LORD A. }
LADY A. } (*Going to the top of the stage and looking out.*)

Hark! those sounds!

MARQ. What means that warlike strain?

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(*Enter* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO *mysteriously.*

BEP. } (*Aside to the* MARQUIS *in alarm.*)
GIAC. }

A brigadier, with armed force,
On tow'rds this spot directs his course!
Let us fly!

MARQ. Never!—cowards! remain!

BEP. I quake with fear!

MARQ. What is't ye dread?—Am I not here?

(*Enter* LORENZO *and the Carbiniers, met and followed by a crowd of villagers and peasants. The people of the Inn enter from the second wing,* L. H. *The soldiers range themselves towards the* R. H. *The villagers peasants and servants of the Inn fill up the back.*)

CHORUS.

Victoria! Victoria! Rejoice!
Joy now reign around!
Raise the grateful voice!
They } come with victory crown'd!
We }

(*Enter* ZERLINA, *hastily.*)

ZERL. (*Hastening joyfully to* LORENZO.)
Again I greet my friend!

LORD A. } (*Impatiently to* LORENZO.)
LADY A. }

Our anxious torments end!

LOREN. In deep silence proceeding,
The daring band we track'd;
And their retreat impeding,
We their numbers attack'd

MARQ. (*Aside.*) And I was away!

LOREN. With fury, first, at bay,
Brave and dauntless they stood;
But, ere long, twenty lay
Expiring in their blood.

MARQ. (*Aside.*) Oh, revenge!

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LOREN. Soon the rest from us fly
In fear and wild defeat;
While thus our joyous cry
Echoes around repeat:
Victoria!

CHORUS.

Victoria!—Rejoice!—
Joy now reign around!
Raise the grateful voice!
They / We } come with victory crown'd!

LOREN. (*Advancing towards* LORD A.) My lord, our victory over the banditti will afford you cause for joy, for upon the body of one of the robbers whom we killed, I found this rich treasure. (*He takes the box from one of the men, red morocco and gold, rather large, and filled with jewels.*)

LADY A. (*Seizing the box with eager joy.*) 'Tis mine! Oh, happiness!

LORD A. The jewels!—Oh, kind fortune! (LORD *and* LADY A. *open the box to examine its contents.*)

MARQ. (*Aside.*) Cursed fate!—To lose at once, through him (*pointing to* LORENZO) my comrades and my prize.

BEP. (*Aside to Giacomo.*) Now that's a shameful robbery—to go and despoil the dead of their property.

LOREN. And now, once more farewell!

ZERL. (*Anxiously.*) Will you leave us again so soon?

LOREN. I must.

ZERL. But wherefore this moment?

LOREN. The chief of the desperate band has contrived to escape us; but we are on his track, and he cannot long baffle our search. Farewell, Zerlina!

LADY A. Stay Signor,—one instant. (*Hurriedly to* LORD A.) My lord, your pocket-book.

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LORD A. Eh! my pocket-book? — (*drawing it out reluctantly,*) pray why, my dear?

LORD A. Make haste, my lord, give it me.—(*She opens the pocket-book, takes out some notes, and addresses* LORENZO.) Signor Captain, thus much at parting:—My husband here who esteems and honours courage, is your debtor in one thousand ducats which I here present you.

LOREN. (*Drawing back.*) Madam!

LADY A. Nay,—only read yonder paper. (*Pointing to one of the placards affixed upon the pillars.*) The reward is richly merited, and shall be your's.

LOREN. (*Putting back the notes, which* LADY A. *presses upon him.*) Never! Think me not so mercenary, madam.

LADY A. (*In a low voice to him.*) 'Tis Zerlina's portion; refuse it not, but rather accept a treasure to-day, that may obtain you a more precious one to-morrow.

ZERL. (*Coming between, and taking the bank notes hastily.*) I accept for him. He is now, thank heaven! as rich as his rival.

LOREN. (*With joy.*) And I may then—

ZERL. Seek my father—

LOREN. And ask of him—

ZERL. Even to-morrow—

LOREN. Thy heart—

ZERL. And my hand.

LOREN. Joyful hour!

ZERL. Happy destiny!

LOREN. (*Gratefully to* LADY A.) Ah, madam! you have made me blest indeed. A short farewell, Zerlina. Nothing shall keep me long from thy presence! (*He goes to his party, which he marshals in order for departure.*)

MARQ. (*Aside.*) Revenge shall overtake thy steps! Keep

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by me, friends; all's yet in our favour. The father of the girl will be absent all night; the house is almost empty; my lord unarmed.

BEP. But the soldiers?

MARQ. They are departing; they are going elsewhere to surprise us.

GIAC. Ha! ha! a pleasant journey to 'em!

MARQ. Obey punctually the orders I shall give ye, and to-night shall yield us rich booty, and full vengeance!

(Finale resumed.)

LOREN. *(To his troop.)* Let's on; To conquest, friends! Again.
MARQ. *(Aside to* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO.)
They depart—We safe remain,
LOREN. ZERL. Farewell!

LORENZO AND ZERLINA.
Hope in my heart once more is smiling;
Past ills Fortune will soon repay!

LORD A. *and* LADY A.
May kind Fate, propitious smiling,
Guide him safely on his way!

MARQ. BEP. *and* GIAC.
Let revenge upon us smiling,
On to vengeance point the way!

CHORUS.
Hope, once more upon them smiling,
Every evil will repay!

LORENZO *and* ZERLINA.
Love each care now beguiling,
Around us will play!
MARQUIS. *(Aside to his Companions.)*
Ere the dawning of day,
Their precautions beguiling,
We'll make them our prey!

Together.

ZERL. LOREN. *and* CHORUS.
Let each heart rejoice!
Pleasure reign around!
Raise the grateful voice!
We'll } Come with victory
They'll } crown'd!
Victoria! Victoria!
Still let that cry aloud resound!

LORD A. *and* LADY A.
We may now rejoice!
All we lost is found!
Raise the grateful voice!
They'll come with victory crown'd!
Victoria! Victoria!
Still let that cry aloud resound!

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MARQUIS, BEPPO, *and* GIACOMO. *(Aside.)*
Though they now rejoice,
In our toils they're bound!
Never shall their voice
Again with victory sound!
Victoria! victoria!
Our band shall all their hopes confound!

The servants of the inn come out with torches, to light LADY A. *and* LORD A. *into the inn.*

(LORENZO, *at the head of his soldiers, files off at the top of the stage, followed by the villagers.* LORD A. *leads his Lady into the inn,* R. H. *The* MARQUIS *graciously salutes them as they depart, and exit. One of the servants of the inn* (ROBERTO) *conducts* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO *towards the barn.*)

END OF ACT I.

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ACT II.—SCENE I.

A sleeping chamber in the inn. At the front wings two closet glass doors facing the audience. Near to the second wing a bed with curtains, (very plain) and before it a small table with a mirror, a chair at the foot, and another at the side. At the second wing another door leading to the lower rooms. At the back, in the centre, is a practicable window opening on the country, and a settee under it. A mandoline hangs near it. The stage is quite dark as the curtain goes up. (*Music.*)

Enter ZERLINA *through the glass door, a light in her hand.*

ZERL. So,—my lord's and my lady's chamber for the night is quite prepared; and, their supper over, they may retire to their rest as soon as ever they please; they'll find, I hope, that nothing is wanting to their comfort. The reputation of our house must not suffer in my father's absence. (*Placing a light on the table.*) Well, I have now a few moments to myself for the first time the whole day; what happiness!—Undisturbed and unobserved I may once more devote my thoughts to the dear absent object they love most to dwell upon.

SONG.

Oh, hour of joy! from restraint I now am free!
One moment's mine, and I yield it, dearest, to thee!
How much I love I've not e'en time to own;—
Lest I forget, I repeat it when alone.—

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Yes, I love with heart sincere,
And thy image, Lorenzo! so dear,
Is grav'd for ever here!
Oh, hour of joy!—from restraint I now am free!
One moment's mine, and I yield it, dearest! to thee.

How impatiently I wait for my father's return! I am sure his heart will now yield to the wishes of mine, since Lorenzo's fortune is more than equal to Francesco's. Hark! My lord and my lady are coming up to bed;—they're on the stairs.—*(snatching up the light, she runs and throws open the door.)*—This way, my lord;—this way, my lady.—Your chamber is quite ready.

(Enter LORD *and* LADY A. LORD A. *with a night taper in his hand, which* ZERLINA *takes from him and puts on the table where there is another candle which she lights.)*

TRIO.

LORD A. Let us, I pray,
Good wife, to rest!
I have long'd for my sleep all the day!
Of all his comforts, 'tis confest,
A husband finds good sleep the best. (*yawning.*)

LADY A. (*Displeased.*) What, my lord! so *soon* to rest?
Your repose somewhat longer delay!
The time was, I can well attest,
You were much less inclin'd to rest.

ZERL. (*Aside.*) This good my lord loves well his rest!

LORD A. (*Aside.*)
But one year in wedlock join'd,
And no longer to agree!
Once so mild, so soft, so kind,—
Who such a change could e'er foresee;

LADY A. (*Aside.*)
But one year in wedlock join'd,
And thus rude he dares to be!
Once all fondness,—now unkind,—
Who such a change could e'er foresee!

ZER. (*Aside.*) But one year in wedlock join'd,
And yet thus to disagree!
When *my* fate Hymen shall bind,
With *us* the same it ne'er shall be.—

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LORD A. The hour is late.—New dangers dreading,
We must depart at break of day.
LADY A. No, no, my lord.—Zerlina's wedding
To witness I intend to stay.
ZERL. L. H. My heart with gratitude's imprest;
LADY A. (*Crossing to* ZERLINA.)
My friendship further still I'll shew;—
Treasure my words within your breast,
What *husbands* are I'll let you know—
My dear, all husbands you must know—
LORD A. (*Interrupting her.*)
Let us, I pray, good wife, to rest!
ZERL. Aught else does my lord now demand?
LORD A. No; so good night, my pretty maid.
LADY A. You must wait, and give me your aid.
ZERL. I'm at your ladyship's command.

(*As they are going out,* LORD A. *suddenly stops, and fixes his looks on* LADY A.'S *neck.*)

LORD A. Eh! what's become, my dear, I pray,
Of the gold locket which every day
I us'd to see hanging at your side,—
By a black ribbon always tied?
LADY A. (*Confused.*) What the picture?
LORD A. Yes; it is not there.
LADY A. 'Tis somewhere else.
LORD A. Well, but where?
LADY A. (*crossing* R. H.) Let us, I pray, good lord to rest!
You've long'd for your sleep all the day.
Of all his comforts, 'tis confest,
A husband finds good sleep the best.

LORD A. (*Aside.*)
But one year in wedlock join'd,
And no longer to agree!
Once so mild, so soft, so kind,
Who such a change could e'er foresee!

LADY A. (*Aside.*)
But one year in wedlock join'd,
And thus rude he dares to be!
Once all fondness, now unkind,
Who such a change could e'er foresee!

ZERLINA (*Aside.*) But one year in wedlock join'd,
And yet thus to disagree!
When *my* fate hymen shall bind,
With *us* the same it ne'er shall be!

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(*At the end of the trio,* ZERLINA *lights* LORD *and* LADY A. *into their room, leaving on the table her own night candle, which gives a very faint light.*)

(*After a while, the* MARQUIS *appears at the door, his movements silent and cautious.*)

MARQ. All seem to have retired for the night; a favourable stillness reigns through the inn, and not a creature, fortune be thanked, has seen me ascend the stairs. So far all is right. As I understood, my Lord's room is the *second* chamber on the first floor, at the end of the corridor. This is certainly the *first* chamber; but which is the *second*? Is it this? (*Having advanced,* L. H. *he uncloses the glass-door of the closet, which he leaves open.*) No. As far as I can discern 'tis a mere lumber-room—trunks, chairs, curtains—(*looking towards the other glass door,*) then *that* must be the corridor leading to the English Lord's bed-chamber. (*He goes, opens the right-hand door and looks in.*) Yes—I'm right.—There is no other passage, no other outlet whatever,—our prey cannot escape us. Let me now apprize my comrades whom they lodged in the barn. (*Opening the centre window.*) They ought by this time to be out of it, yet I see them not. The moon has set, and the night grows darker. Perhaps they are on the watch somewhere about the house. (*Perceiving the mandoline that hangs near the window, and taking it down.*) Now for the signal agreed upon;—but should the people hear me? Well, what matter?—I'm not inclined to sleep, so I sing, that's all. We sing night and day in Italy. Besides, my carol will rouse no suspicions. 'Tis the air warbled by all the tender-hearted damsels who wait their lover's coming; so it's pretty common all through the country!

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SERENADE.

Young Agnes, beauteous flower,
Sweet as blooming May,
One evening from her tower
Thus pour'd her tender lay:
The night now hath spread its shade
And 'twill hide thee from all
Then haste to thy faithful maid,
Darkness, veils bower and hall;
Oh, haste beneath her tower!
Dost thou not hear love's call?

The silent hour invites thee,
No star sheds its ray;
No danger, love, affrights thee,
Wherefore then dost thou stay?
When sunbeams illume the sky,
Guardians then may appal,
But now clos'd is every eye,
Let thy steps gently fall,
The silent hour invites thee;
Dost thou not hear love's call?

(*At the conclusion of the second verse,* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO *appear at the open window.*)

BEP. Diavolo!

MARQ. Hush! Enter without noise.

GIAC. 'Ifaith, it was no easy matter to get out of that cursed barn into which they crammed us.

(*He closes the window,*)

BEP. (*coming forward noisily.*) No indeed.—(*Captain stops him, and he continues more softly.*) They treated us like valuable articles, as we are;—they were afraid we might be stolen. We are exact though, you see, Captain. Men of honour are always punctual.

MARQ. Be silent.—My Lord and his Lady are but just gone into their room.

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GIAC. And where are the twenty thousand ducats worth of diamonds we have been robbed of?

BEP. And the bank bills of which they cheated us?

MARQ. They are there, along with them. (GIACOMO *and* BEPPO *half-drawing their knives, are advancing towards the chamber, the* MARQUIS *stops them.*) Where go ye?

GIAC. To get back our property.

MARQ. Hold a while; they're not yet asleep. There's also some one in their chamber, who will, however, soon come out; the young girl there of the inn.

GIAC. Zerlina?

BEP. Good: we've a reckoning with her, too; forward little devil! There are clean one thousand ducats properly *our's*, which she has turned away out of the lump.

MARQ. They'll come back to us again, fear not. But it isn't against *her* that my vengeance burns; 'tis against that *Lorenzo*, her lover, who has deprived us of a score of brave fellows; and by Saint Diavolo, my patron, I will be *revenged* upon him—or I'm not an Italian.

ZERL. (*Without.*) Good night, my lord; I will not forget the hour.

MARQ. Hush! the girl comes. (*Shewing them the glass door,* L. H.) Into that closet,—quick—behind those curtains.

BEP. (*Hesitating.*) Behind the curtains.

MARQ. Yes, to be sure—till she's gone.

(*They all three enter the closet,* L.H. *shutting the door after them.*)

Re-enter ZERLINA.

ZERL. Good night, my lord; good night, my lady; you are sure to rest well; the house is very quiet, and very safe. Heaven be praised, every body is now in bed and asleep, and I shall not be sorry to be the same. I am dreadfully

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tired with my day's work! I must make haste and fall asleep very fast, for it's very late, and I must be up at dawn. (*She takes the outside day-cover off the couch.*) My bed, to be sure, is nothing like my lord's—far from it. (*While speaking, she throws open the glass doors of the closet,* L. H. *which open out towards the audience, and places upon a chair which is just at the entrance inside, the bed cover which she has folded. She leaves the closet doors open, and continuing her speech, she gets up towards the couch again, keeping her back to the closet. During this, the* MARQUIS *and his companions have got behind the loose curtain.*) It's neither so fine, nor so soft;—but no matter, I rather fancy, for all that, *my* sleep will be the sweeter. I am so happy!

GIAC. (*Appearing at the entrance of the closet.*) Why, zounds! this is her room!

BEP. (*Ditto.*) What shall we do?

MARQ. (*Ditto.*) Wait quietly till she's asleep.

BEP. Well, then, let her make haste.

ZERL. To-morrow Lorenzo will return! He will ask me of my father, who certainly can't refuse him *now;* for he is rich—he's worth one thousand ducats! (*Drawing the notes from her bosom.*) Here they are! They are *his*—stay, stay—they are *our's;* they belong to *us.* Are they all right though? (*Counting them.*) Yes; I am always so in fear of any being missing. Pretty creatures, how I do love them! (*Kissing them.*) So *much,* that they sha'n't leave me—they shall sleep along with me, under my pillow. (*Placing them under the bolster.*)

BEP. (*From the closet.*) Those rascally notes! (MARQ. *claps his hand on his mouth.*)

MARQ. Will you hold your tongue?

ZERL. (*Drawing forward the table with the mirror.*) And

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as to Francesco, whom my father is to bring with him as his son-in-law, why—I'll speak to him frankly. I'll tell him—I don't love him; that'll comfort him;—(*brings down the chair from the side of the bed,*)—and to-morrow, by this time, I shall perhaps be the wife of Lorenzo! Oh! (*With delight.*)

BEP. What a tongue!

MARQ. Hush!

ZERL. His wife? Ah! I have so long—so long dreamt of it!—aye, every night going to bed; but *now* there's no more doubt about it; I shall be married to him to-morrow, that's a sure thing.

CAVATINA AND CONCERTED PIECE.

(*As the symphony begins, she sits before the table, (her back to the closet), and takes off her ribbon head-dress, her necklace and her ear-rings; then, as indicated in the music, she proceeds to take off, at different periods, her variegated apron, her short sleeves, and her outward corset of ribbons, remaining, at last, in a neat, white under-dress.*)

'Tis to-morrow—yes, to-morrow,
That makes me a happy wife!
Thus ending ev'ry sorrow,
I shall now be blest for life!
We shall, I'm sure, ne'er disagree,—
(Takes out her waist-pins.)
Nor resemble the *great* in our love;
For dear Lorenzo kind will be,
And *jealous* he'll never, never prove—
Ah! *(Squeezing her finger.)*—carefully and slow.
Deuce take the pin!—

BEP. *(Peeping through the cabinet.)* How pretty she looks so!
(The MARQUIS *makes a threatening gesture.)*
Well, I'm not speaking; I but look!

MARQ. *(Pushing* BEPPO *away, and taking his place.)* Begone!
'Tis *my* place here to see what's going on.

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(*The* MARQUIS *is looking through the panes,* R.H. BEPPO *kneeling on his left knee, and* GIACOMO *leaning against the side of the door,* L.H.. ZERLINA *rises, leaving apron and curricle on the chair, which she puts back again near the bed.*

ZERL. *(Going on with her night-toilet.)*—

My Lorenzo's heart I know ;
In his wife he'll e'er confide ;
Oh, how I wish the knot were tied !
Haste, to-morrow ! Haste, to-morrow !
And make me a happy wife ;
Thus ending ev'ry sorrow,
Let me now be blest for life !
What though my figure all the grace
Of *my lady's* may not display,
Yet Lorenzo—though such be the case,
Is not to be pitied, I must say.
(Standing before the glass in an attitude, and surveying herself with much satisfaction.)
For a servant—there's no denying,
Here's a shape that's not much amiss !
There's no cause, I fancy, for sighing,
When one boasts such a figure as this !
I'm sure there are some more amiss.

MARQ. BEP. GIAC. } *(In the closet. unable longer to repress their laughter.* Ha ! Ha !

ZERL. *(Alarmed al the sound, and listening, while the others precipitately draw back and hide themselves.)*—

I'm sure—a laugh I heard !
Was't from the chamber of my lord ?
No ; awake he could not keep.—
(Going and listening at his door.)
I hear no noise ; he's fast asleep.
(Resuming her tranquillity, and going on with her song.)
To-morrow ending ev'ry sorrow,
Makes me blest for life !
But now, I must to rest.
(She puts the table back in its place)

MARQ. BEP. GIAC. } Heav'n be praised !

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ZERL. My nightly pray'r be first addrest—
(Kneeling by the side of the couch, with her hands clasped.)
Oh, holy Virgin! whom I adore,
Lorenzo's fate and mine watch o'er!
(She rises, and seating herself on the side of the bed, she unties the strings of her shoes)
Good night, Lorenzo dear!
Our bliss now is near.
Oh, holy Virgin! whom I adore,
Lorenzo's fate and mine watch o ——

(Sleep gradually overcoming her during her prayer, her eyes close, and her head falls on her pillow.)

(After a pause of deep silence, the MARQUIS, BEPPO, *and* GIACOMO, *cautiously advance from their place of concealment.)*

MARQ. } Silence befriending,
BEP. } To aid us conspires!
GIAC. } Prudence attending,
Vengeance inspires!

GIAC. *(approaching* ZERLINA.) She's asleep.—
(He blows out the light.)

BEP. And now for my lord——
MARQ. Should he wake?
GIAC. *(Drawing his dagger.)* To make him dumb I undertake!

Together.

Prudence attending,
His death requires!—
Silence befriending,
To aid us conspires!

GIAC. Come on!

(As they are on the point of entering the chamber, BEPPO *suddenly stops his companions, and points to* ZERLINA.)

BEP. Hold!—What if yonder maid
By the noise we make alarm'd,
Should raise the household to her aid?

MARQ. *(Smiling.)* With Beppo's prudence I am charm'd!

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GIAC. How act, then?
BEP. Let's begin by her!
GIAC. (*Turning to* MARQUIS.) Is't agreed?
MARQ. Nay—that were pity!
BEP. Wond'rous indeed!
Our captain then, at last, grows tender and repenting!
MARQ. I, dog?—Dar'st think I recede?
(*Giving him his dagger.*)
Here—strike!—away all weak relenting!

Together.

Prudence attending,
Her death requires!
Darkness befriending,
To aid us conspires!

(BEPPO *going behind the couch with his face to the audience raises the dagger to stab* ZERLINA.)

ZERL. (*In her sleep repeating her prayer.*
Oh! holy virgin whom I adore,
Lorenzo's fate and mine watch o'er!

(BEPPO *agitated and hesitating, bends down behind the couch.*)

BEP. She prays!
GIAC. Do not pause!—strike!
MARQ. (*Turning away his head.*) Go on!—Delay no more!

(BEPPO *raises his arm again, and is going to strike, when a violent knocking is heard at the outer door of the inn, and all three remain motionless and astounded.*)

MARQ. } They knock without! 'Tis at the entrance gate!
BEP. } Means then fate our hopes to blight?
GIAC. }

(*The knocking becomes louder.*)

ZERL. (*Awaking, and stretching her arms.*)
What!—so soon be awak'd?—Who's knocking at that rate
In the midst of the night?

(*Chorus of* CARBINIERS, *without.*)
Awake, awake, good people, pray!
We all are honest cavaliers;—
Arise, for soon it will be day,—
Rise and let in the Carbiniers!—

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BEP. Eh! Carbiniers? *(trembling.)*
Captain! did you hear?
MARQ. (*Coolly.*) Are you then afraid?
BEP. Again what brings them here?
LORENZO. (*Without*) Zerlina! Zerlina!—descend!
Dos't thou not hear?—'Tis the voice of thy friend;
ZERL. (*With delight.*) 'Tis Lorenzo!

(*She hastens to put on the things again which she had taken off.*)

MARQ. }
BEP. } (*Retiring again towards the closet.* L. H.)
GIAC. }

Prudence attending
Our hearts inspire!
Darkness befriending
Bids us now retire!

(*They regain their hiding place. The knocking is renewed.*)

ZERL. (*Hastily, re-adjusting her dress.*) Do wait a little, good folks!—By'r lady, give yourselves a little patience!—(*Going to the window and opening it. Daylight is seen.*) Is it, indeed, you, Lorenzo?

LOREN. I myself, sweet.

ZERL. You're very sure it's you?

LOREN. 'Tis myself and my comrades, whom you've kept waiting a whole hour.

ZERL. People must have time to dress!—when one is so suddenly knocked up—but here—(*throwing a key from the window.*) There's the key of the kitchen for you. Come in that way;—the lamp is still burning;—and besides, here's day-light already.—(*She returns to the table to complete her dress.*) Let me make haste, by the aid of a regiment of pins!—One wouln't like to be caught quite a figure; especially by a party of smart soldiers.—Oh! dreadful!

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CARBS. (*Knocking, and calling without, loudly.*) Hey! house! within!

ZERL. Bless me! what noisy fellows!

LORD A. (*Outside.*) Don't be frightened, Lady A.!—I'll go and see what it is. Keep yourself calm, my dear! (*Noise again below.*)

Enter LORENZO.

LOREN. Zerlina!

ZERL. (*With a half scream, and enveloping herself in one of the curtains.*) Ha!—Fie, sir!—You shouldn't bolt into people's rooms in that manner.

LOREN. Forgive me, Zerlina, and affect not such coyness. You are ever beautiful in any guise.

(*Enter* LORD A. *from his room.* R. H. *He has his coat on, but no waistcoat; his shirt-collar is half open, and a pocket-handkerchief tied round his head.*)

LORD. A. Upon my life it's shocking,—positively shocking to disturb quiet persons in this unconscionable manner. I have paid for a nice comfortable sleep, and this is fairly robbing one of one's money.—(*Seeing* LORENZO.) Ha!—what, it's you, Mr. Brigadier, is it?—Pray, what's all this terrible noise about, and what brings you back at this untimely hour? (LORENZO *and* LORD A. *come forward, leaving* ZERLINA *to her dressing.*)

LOREN. (*Crossing to the centre.*) Good news, my lord. I believe that Master Diavolo can no longer escape us.

ZERL. }
LORD A. } Indeed?

LOREN. Our information was bad, and we were pursuing him quite in a wrong direction, when about three leagues off, we chanced to fall in with an honest miller, who said to us, "Signor Cavaliers, I know where the bandit now is

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" whom you are in search of. He's not in the mountain. I " am well acquainted with his person, having been two " whole days his prisoner, and I saw him this very evening " pass in an open carriage on the main road to Terracina."

ZERL. Is it possible?

LOREN. The honest fellow then offered to be our guide, and made us retrace our steps. Previously, however, to our renewing the pursuit, it was my wish to get the men a few hours rest, for they have marched the whole night, and are dying with hunger.

LORD A. Dying with hunger?—what a shocking death!

ZERL. Holy Virgin!—And yourself?

LOREN. Why, I am somewhat in the same predicament too. Brigadiers are not exempt in those cases.

ZERL. But there's more than one inn on the road, where you might long ago have found refreshment.

LOREN. But there was only this one where I could have found Zerlina.

ZERL. Oh, sir, your servant!—Was that it?

LOREN. Just so; that was it which made me still cry out —" Gentlemen,—Forward! March!"—Those are the occasions on which it's delightful to be a commander.

ZERL. Poor fellow! I'll go and get you something to eat directly.

LOREN. No, no,—begin by my comrades. They're not in love, so they're more in a hurry. Fly, my own Zerlina!

ZERL. My own Zerlina, indeed! what freedom! truly the gentleman fancies himself my husband already.

LOREN. Not to-day; but, to-morrow——!—(*Seizing her in his arms.*)

ZERL. Have done, sir!—Have done, will you?—I don't know what you mean by——

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CARBS. (*Without, ringing, and beating on the table noisily.*) Ho! within! somebody! house!

ZERL. There now;—there are your comrades growing impatient. (*Disengaging herself.*) They're not like you,—they're better behaved.—Coming! coming!—I'll give them all there's in the house, and then I'll keep the best I can get, and have it ready for you in a few minutes.

CARBS. House! Landlord!

ZERL. (*Running out.*) Hey! what a noisy set!

[*IT IS NOW FULL DAY-LIGHT.*]

LORD. A. Signor Brigadier, I've scarcely had a blink of sleep the whole night.—Why, you're a set of barbarians in this shocking land!

LOREN. (*Smiling.*) Our land, Sir Englishman, has its charms—to us, at least; and a traveller, whose mind is just and liberal, while he prefers his own soil, will yet find in every country something to admire as well as to condemn; but those, my lord, who travel merely to display their own importance and their narrow prejudices, would do more wisely to stay and be respected at home, than to travel and be ridiculed abroad.

LORD A. For my part, I never again will believe what travellers say. I've not enjoyed an hour's comfort, nor relished a morsel since I crossed the sea. All that I have discovered hitherto, is, that every thing out of England is positively shocking,—and now that I'm out of it myself——

LOREN. (*Half aside.*) You are shocking, too.

LORD. A. Eh?

LOREN. Only a passing reflection, my lord.

LORD A. Oh!—'Gad, though, I must go and rejoin my lady, who is half dead with alarm. "Calm yourself, my love,"—I said to her.—"Compose your delicate nerves;—I'll go and see."—(*Mimicking a woman's voice.*)—"My lord!

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"my dear lord! don't leave me all alone!"—and she did press me in her arms so tenderly!—I haven't felt anything like it for a very long while.

LOREN. Ha! Ha! Ha! You see, my lord, in some cases, fear is of some benefit. (*He goes up, and looks out at the door to see if* ZERLINA *is returning; then sits down near the table.*)

LORD A. Fear?—Ha! Ha! Ha!—Fear may do very well for *women*, poor, weak-hearted things!—but for us, Signor brigadier, for us who are men——! (*A piece of furniture falls with great noise in the closet.*) Hey what's that? (*Alarmed.*)

MARQ. (*Aside to* BEPPO.) You awkward rascal!

LORD A. Mr. Brigadier! did you hear that noise?

LOREN. (*Coolly.*) Somebody has overturned a chair that's all.

LORD A. We're not by ourselves here.

LOREN. It's I dare say, her ladyship or her maid.

LORD A. There's no maid in my wife's room; and what's more, she's not upon this side, but upon that. There's something wrong.

LOREN. (*Still quietly seated.*) D'ye think so, my lord?

LORD A. (*Uneasy and still looking towards the closet.*) I'm quite sure of it

BEP. (*Aside.*) We're all lost to a certainty!

MARQ. Hush!

FINALE TO ACT II.

LORD A. Would it not be as well, Sir Brigadier,
If any one's in there to ascertain?

LOREN. (*Rising.*) We may look—

LORD A. Yes, do look.

BEP. Our time is come!

MARQ. No fear.—
Leave all to *me*, while ye conceal'd remain.

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(*At the instant that* LORENZO *crosses to enter the closet, the* MARQUIS *opening the door, which he immediately shuts again, stands before him.*)

LORD A. } Amazement!
LOREN. }

MARQ. (*With his finger to his lips.*) Silence, pray!

LORD A. 'Tis the Marquis once more

LOREN. (*To the* MARQUIS *haughtily.*)
We have met, I believe, already once before.

MARQ. Last night.

LOREN. (*Hastily and loud.*) At this hour wherefore here?

MARQ. (*With an air of mystery.*) Not so high!
I've reason good to hide me thus from ev'ry eye.

LOREN. What reason?

MARQ. (*Pretending embarrassment.*)
Nay—I can't explain thus before *two:*
Say it were for example—a tender *rendez-vous?*

LORD A. }
LOREN. } Great Heaven!

MARQ. (*Passing between them.*)
Well then, yes,—I'll confess it *entre nous*—
But be discreet—it *was* a *rendez vous.*—

LORENZO *and* LORD A. (*Aside.*)
Horrid doubts thro' me gliding,
My tortur'd soul oppress;
Yet my fears longer hiding,
All emotion I'll suppress!—

MARQUIS. (*Aside.*)
Their agony deriding,
My joy I can't repress!
Both their hearts now dividing,
Dark fears and doubts possess!

BEP. *and* GIAC. (*Aside.*)
My fears are fast subsiding,
Once more *we* may escape, I guess.
In his skill while confiding,
We are sure of success!

LORD A. (*Advancing to the* MARQUIS.)
At least, sir, may one know—without offence or strife,
To whom you come here by night?

LOREN. (*In a low voice, and with a threatening air.*) Is it to Zerlina?

LORD A. (*The same on the other side.*) Is it, sir, to my wife?

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MARQ. Excuse me;—thus to question me you've no right;—
Secrets like these I to reveal am loth.

LOREN. } Say to which of the two.—
LORD A. }

MARQ. (*Laughing lightly.*) What if I came to *both*?

LOREN. } The base doubts your vile words would convey,
and } Shall here be full explain'd without evasion or delay.
LORD A. }

MARQ. (*Exultingly aside, and looking at them one after another.*)
O'er all my foes, at last, revenge will be my own!

(*To* LORD A. *in an under voice, and taking him apart.*)
As for *you*, noble lord! believe me silence were best;
Your lady's charms, I own, my heart has long confest!
And this endearing pledge—by which her love is shewn—

(*Drawing the miniature from his pocket and exhibiting it.*)

LORD A. (*Furious.*) Fire and death!—We shall meet!

MARQ. (*Coolly and in a low voice.*) Whenever you please—so be't.—

(*Taking* LORENZO *aside and pointing to* LORD A.)
'Twas my wish that your shame to you lord should be unknown,—
But you insist—

LOREN. I do.

MARQ. (*Pointing to the cabinet.*) I was there, and I came
To Zerlina.

LOREN. (*Struck with horror.*) Zerlina!

MARQ. You conceive,—I suppose?

LOREN. To be betray'd by her! And shall I bear my shame?
No! (*Rushing away.*)

MARQ. (*Catching his hand.*)
Hold! Dare not to think you may her fame expose.

LOREN. You her guilt defend?

MARQ. Yes, and will your rage oppose.

LOREN. (*Stopping, and surveying the* MARQUIS *with restrained fury.*)
When the great dare the heart of a soldier to rive,
If *brave* they be—

MARQ. (*In a low voice.*)
Enough! I'm your's?—Alone,—*seven* the hour,—
Beneath the rocks.—

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LOREN. *(The same.)* 'Tis well.
MARQ. *(Aside with joy.)* He'll ne'er return alive!
Let but my friends hold him once in their pow'r,
To revenge their companions their swords will contrive.

(*The* MARQUIS *keeps the centre of the stage,* LORENZO *and* LORD A. *at opposite sides, and* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO *advancing their heads from the closet left-hand.*)

Together.

LORENZO. *(Aside.)*
Bitter hour! Horrid thought!
I have lost ev'ry joy;
When with woe life is fraught,
What remains but to die!

LORD A. *(Aside.)*
Bitter hour! Horrid thought!
I have lost every joy!
Thus to shame by her brought!
From my rage let her fly!

MARQUIS *(Aside.)*
Happy hour! Pleasing thought!
I each fear may defy!
In my toils he is caught!
My revenge now is nigh!

BEPPO *and* GIACOMO *(Aside.)*
Happy hour! Pleasing thought!
We each fear may defy!
In the toils they are caught,
Our revenge now is nigh!

Enter LADY A. *from her chamber.*

LADY A. What dreadful noise pervades the place?
(*To* LORD A.)
To soothe my fears you've little car'd.

Enter ZERLINA.

ZERL. *(Running to* LORENZO*)*
My dear Lorenzo!—all's prepar'd.
Why, what means that lowering face?
LOREN. *and* LORD A. *(Aside.)* Base deceiver!
LADY A. (*Tenderly to* LORD A.) Dear lord! I pray—
LORD A. *(Violently.)*
Touch me not. We must part before another day.
LADY A. *(With astonishment.)* Part my lord!
LORD A. I'm resolv'd.
ZERL. *(To* LORENZO *on the other side anxiously.)*
Dear Lorenzo! oh, say——
LOREN. *(Coldly and without looking at her.)*
Away, deceiver! away.
ZERL. *and* LADY A. *(Aside.)*
What mystery is this? What fears my heart o'ercome!

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LOREN. *(To* ZERLINA *aside.)*
Your falsehood to conceal, I consent to be dumb.
ZERL. Can it be!
LOREN. But begone!
ZERL. Dear Lorenzo!
LOREN. No more.
ZERL. Hear me yet!
LOREN. 'Tis in vain! All your vows I restore.
(Apart to the MARQUIS.*)* At *seven*—beneath the rocks—
MARQ. Be sure I will not fail!
ZERL. *(Much agitated, aside.)* My fears prevail!
LORD A. *(To his wife.)* Tears wont avail!
LADY A. *(Aside.)* Anger and grief my heart assail!

Together.

ZERLINA *and* LORENZO.
Bitter hour! Horrid thought!
I have lost every joy!
Since with woe life is fraught,
What remains but to die!

LORD A. *(Aside.)*
Bitter hour! Horrid thought!
I have lost ev'ry joy!
Thus to shame by her brought!
From my rage let her fly!

LADY A. *(Aside.)*
Bitter hour! Horrid thought!
I have lost ev'ry joy.
Who all this can have wrought?
From my rage let him fly!

MARQ. BEP. *and* GIAC. *(aside.)*
Happy hour! Pleasing thought!
I / We } each fear may defy!
In our toils they are caught;
My / Our } Revenge now is nigh!

(LORD A. *moves to regain his chamber, his wife hangs upon him, and prevents him.* LORENZO *rushing towards the door, is held back by* ZERLINA, *who implores him still to hear her.* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO *half open the closet door to come out; the* MARQUIS *stretching out his hand towards them, commands them by signs to keep back, and wait yet longer. The curtain falls upon the picture, and ends the second act.*

END OF ACT II.

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ACT III.—SCENE I.

An extensive and romantic landscape. On the R. H. *an outward door appertaining to the Inn, and stairs ascending to a surrounding gallery. Before it, a tuft of trees. On the* L. H. *a leafy arbour containing a small table with garden-seats. Towards the horizon, a large mountain with various paths conducting to it. On its summit rises conspicuously a small hermitage-chapel with a belfry. A little behind the table in the arbour, the decayed trunk of a tree; and between the arbour and the mountain, a patch of arbute-trees. Wood wings.*

(*During the symphony of the following air, the* MARQUIS, *in his Fra-Diavolo costume, enveloped in his dark velvet cloak, and his carbine on his shoulder, descends the mountain-path from* L. *to* R. *and comes down the centre.*)

RECITATIVE—FRA-DIAVOLO.

My companions are warn'd, and our plans fitly laid,
My just revenge full soon to aid!—
Each wish'd-for joy thus to share,
What station with mine can compare?

MARTIAL AIR.

Proudly and wide my standard flies
O'er daring hearts,—a noble band!
All own my sway; whilst, for supplies,
Each trav'ller's wealth I freely command!

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My will is law which none gainsay,
Whate'er I may ordain;—
In silent awe they must obey;—
O'er all, a king I reign!
Proudly and wide my standard flies
O'er daring hearts,—a noble band!
All own my sway; whilst, for supplies,
Each trav'ller's wealth I freely command!
Now a banker I stop!—"Your gold! your gold! your gold!"—
And now a lord is brought!—"Your gold! your gold! your gold!"
A lawyer next is caught:—"Let justice be done—
Restore your plunder—even three-fold!"
Now a pilgrim before me 's led!—
"I have no gold!—I have no bread!"—
"Here are both for you, friend,
Peace your footsteps attend!"
Then a poor simple maid appears;
See how she's shaking with her fears!—
"Oh, dear! have mercy!—your pity pray shew!—
Oh! oh! oh! oh!—
Here's all I have; spare my life! let me go!—
Oh! oh! oh! oh!
Mercy, Mr. Robber!—be mild!
I'm, alas!—but a poor young child!"

CAVATINA.

We never aught demand from the fair;
All due regard to them we shew;
Tho' we gratefully accept whate'er
Their tender hearts deign to bestow.
Ah! what delights abound on every hand!
Who leads a life like to the bold brigand?
Yet—yet,—swift runs of time the sand!

RONDEAU.

Then since life glides so fast away,
Let's enjoy it while yet we may;
For fate, so kind to-day,
Perhaps to-morrow may betray!
As new dangers our steps surround,
Every moment may be our last;
Then, with new pleasures crown'd,
Be ev'ry moment gaily past

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Oh! what joys divine,
Does the brigand's station combine!
Still gay and at ease,
Just like a king, I do as I please;—
I plunder, rob, take people's lives,
Bear off both husbands and their wives;
And oft their hearts to beat I've made,
The last with love, the first with dread!
One trembling bows with hat in hand,
The other smiles, and says—"dear, sweet brigand!"

Then since life glides so fast away,
Let's enjoy it while yet we may;
For fate so kind to-day,
Perhaps to-morrow may betray!
As new dangers our steps surround,
Ev'ry moment may be our last,
Then, with new pleasures crown'd,
Be ev'ry moment gaily past!

Well, (*rubbing his hands*) my plans are fixed, and I think that, this time, Signor Lorenzo will find it somewhat hard to foil them.—Six has just struck by the inn-clock. In an hour more—I shall be rid of him. He is jealous, he is brave; he will be punctual to his appointment—beneath the black rocks—(*smiling*)—where I have ambushed my bold companions, who are anxiously waiting his coming. They are always delighted at the opportunity of lodging a little lead in the head of a Roman brigadier. Now for my other measures.—Let me see.—If I remember right, Zerlina's father, old Matteo, returns home this morning with the new bridegroom to conclude the wedding. Well then, while they are all at the chapel, and the soldiers on full march,—my part is easy. I'll possess myself of my lord's bank-notes, his diamonds,—h'm!—perhaps even I'll take his wife—I think I owe her that much attention.—Yes, I'll invite her to come and pass a little time with us in the

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mountains. Will she be angry?—She'll pretend she is;—but I shall not believe her. It's so pleasant to relate one's adventures in the London circles.—(*Mimicking.*)—"Oh! "my dear! such a horrid thing! I was run away with by "banditti!—but such amiable and polite creatures! they be-"haved to me in such a delightful manner!"—"Did they?"—"Upon my honour!"——After that, they'll *all* be mad to make the tour of Italy. (*After looking round on all sides.*)—The most material point is to watch the departure of Lorenzo and his detachment. I see no signs yet of Beppo and Giacomo, whom I left behind as trusty spies; and I dare not seek them within the inn, for the carbiniers are already on foot,—and besides, I might meet that miller who guides them, and who knows me. An ungrateful rascal,—whom we contented ourselves with only *robbing!*—It's a lesson for the future. (*Taking out his tablets.*) As I see nothing of my spies, I'll make use of the means of communication agreed on—the hollow of that tree.—(*Pointing to the decayed trunk.*) A word or two will suffice for their instruction. (*The music of the following piece begins.*) Hark!—some one approaches! I must escape unobserved.—There!—(*After having written, he tears out the leaf, folds it, throws it into the hollow of the tree, and exit behind the arbour.*)

(*At the same time a number of villagers, male and female, enter from divers sides right and left, wearing green branches on their heads, and some bearing in their hands knotted sticks ornamented with garlands and ribbons. The Carbiniers* (*without caps or arms*) *and the people of the Inn come out to join them. Soon after, a group of young peasants, dancing, and bearing flowers, descend the mountain, announcing to those below the approach of the bridegroom*

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CHORUS AND CONCERTED PIECE

VILLAGERS, PEASANTS, &c.

Hail, blessed morning
Nature adorning!
'Tis Easter day!
Let's sing and play!
This joyful day,
Be grateful and gay!

(*Enter* GIACOMO, *followed by* BEPPO, *from the Inn.*)

GIAC. Loiterer, come!—always the last!
BEP. (*Stretching his arms.*) Good friend, our haste abating,
Let's take an hour's more sleep!
GIAC. What if the captain's waiting?
What will he say? (*Stopping by the arbour.*)
Why—here's all the village, I declare!
BEP. To be sure; 'tis Easter-day;—yet for all that, see there!—
(*Pointing to* GIACOMO'S *head.*)
Not e'en a single branch upon your head you wear!
Do you want, man, to bring us ill-luck?
GIAC. The saints forefend!
(*Plucking a branch and fastening it in his hat.*)
Pious Giacomo's holy zeal is well known to transcend!

(*A fresh party of peasants descends the mountain preceding* MATTEO, *who comes on with* FRANCESCO *and a few followers. Another party carrying garlands on long poles, the flowers attached to each other, comes slowly down the mountain, and forms itself into a line filling up the path.* MATTEO, *and* FRANCESCO, *who, as bridegroom, has the marriage bouquet at his side, advance to the front, welcomed by the different parties on the stage, whose greetings they cordially return.*)

CHORUS.

Hail! blessed morning,
Nature adorning!
'Tis Easter-day!
Let's sing and play!

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Let youth and maiden,
Of sin unladen,
Now deck'd be seen
With boughs of green:
This joyful day,
Be grateful and gay!

MATTEO. (*taking* FRANCESCO's *hand.*)
My son! the Heavens smile as tho' your happiness befriending;
But ere you kneel to love—e'en here now lowly bending,
Let us incline
At our lady's shrine,
In humble praise our grateful voices blending!

(*Some of the female peasants go up among the garland-bearers on the ascent, where they kneel during the prayer others lower down. All kneel.*)

GENERAL CHORUS.
Oh, holy Virgin! bright and fair!
Thy sainted favour ever shew!
Oh! make us worthy of thy care,
And on our hearts thy grace bestow!

MATT. May thy goodness, more and more,
Bless my child each coming day!

CHORUS *of* YOUTHS. Give us wealth, we implore!

CHORUS *of* MAIDENS. Give us husbands, we pray!

Together.
Oh, holy Virgin! bright and fair,
Thy sainted favour ever shew!
Oh, make us worthy of thy care,
And on our hearts thy grace bestow!

(*The prayer over, all rise, and* MATTEO, *shewing them the door of the inn, by signs invites the wedding train to enter. They go in, singing their chorus.*).

GIAC. They're gone. (*Looking by the different paths.*) Do you see the Captain?

BEP. (*Sitting down on the seat near the decayed tree.*) No; I suppose he's gone.

GIAC. Well, and what are you doing there?

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BEP. What am I doing? Why, I am doing—nothing. It's a delightful employment this sunny weather.

GIAC. In case that the Captain could not rejoin us, he said we should find his instructions in the hollow of the rotten tree near the arbour.

BEP. (*Turning round, and putting his hand into the tree.*) This is it. Here's something; a paper—and in his handwriting.

GIAC. Read.

BEP. Read yourself.

GIAC. (*Taking the paper and reading; after looking if they are unobserved.*) "As soon as the girl's lover shall have "set off for the spot of meeting where our comrades await "him,—the carbiniers on their wild-goose chase, and the "people of the inn to the wedding, be sure to give me notice "by ringing the bell of the hermitage. I will then hasten "with some of my brave fellows, and take charge of my "lord and his lady. Wait for me."

BEP. All clear enough.

GIAC. Clear or not; once he says it, it must be done. Let us watch, above all, the departure of the carbiniers.

BEP. Oh, they'll soon be off. We've just seen them o' foot, and ready to take the road.

GIAC. So much the better.

BEP. There's one thing, though, friend Giacomo, that goes against me, and that is, killing this my lord on a Sunday, and such a holiday, too.

GIAC. Pshaw! That might be a fair scruple of conscience enough if the man were a christian; but he's an Englishman. It's enough to bring us good luck for the rest of the year.

BEP. You are right. Nay then, the grace of heaven assist us!

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GIAC. Look, look !—here comes the poor swain, the brigadier Lorenzo ; he's melancholy ; how he sighs !

BEP. Ha ! ha ! ha ! poor amorous fool ! He does well to indulge himself while he can ; for, once he gets to the place of meeting prepared for him by our captain, he won't have much time to sigh.

GIAC. Come this way, and let us leave him to himself.—Mind, though, he doesn't get out of our sight. (*Exeunt behind the arbonr.*)

Enter LORENZO *from the Inn.*

SONG.

" I'm thine ! I'm thine ! " she oft would say,
" For ever thine !—
" Others' love may fade away,
" But never mine !"
Yet she now leaves my heart to grieve,
And break with woe !
I scarce her falsehood can believe,
I lov'd her so !

But, love ! farewell.—I'll now for e'er
The false one fly ;
Her image from my heart I'll tear,
Then silent die !
I'll no longer her falsehood regret ;
Yet, where'er I go,
I fear I never can forget !
— I lov'd her so !

—Yes, I have been able to restrain myself ; I have had the courage to *spare* her,—while it is in my power, before her father, before them all, to tax her with her guilt, to proclaim her crime aloud, and——What have I said? Dishonour her whom I have so loved ! Destroy her for ever ! No : let her marry,—let her be happy if she can ; she shall hear from *my* lips neither complaint nor reproach. The hour of my

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appointment is near; I will go—I will meet death for her; it shall be my only revenge.

Enter MATTEO, ZERLINA, *and two servants from the Inn,* R.H.

MATT. Come, lads; put a table out here; bring the wine. The wedding-party and the carbiniers won't be sorry to quaff a cup or so before we go. Your soldiers are ever a thirsty race.—(MATTEO *keeps continually going backwards and forwards.* ZERLINA, *during the above, has approached* LORENZO, *who is* L. H.

ZERL. *(Timidly.)* Lorenzo, I have been seeking you.—My father is returned.

LOREN. 'Tis well.

ZERL. Francesco is with him.

LOREN. (*With some emotion.*) Francesco!

ZERL. He has presented him to me as my husband. All is prepared for our instant marriage. (*After a pause.*) In an hour's time I am going to be another's if you do not speak,—if you do not explain your strange conduct.

LOREN. Remember *your* conduct, and leave me.

ZERL. Lorenzo, I cannot bear this; be generous; do not oppress me so cruelly;—if your love has changed, if you hate me, tell me so. Oh! I beseech you once more, ere too late——

MATT. (*At the table,* R. H.) What are you doing there, Zerlina, instead of coming to help me?

ZERL. (*Going to him, looking at* LORENZO *all the while.*) Here I am, father.

LOREN. (*Aside.*) What deceit! What hypocrisy!

MATT. (*Calling.*) Roberto! more glasses!

Re-enter BEPPO *and* GIACOMO, L. H.

BEP. (*Sitting at the table in the arbour,* GIACOMO, L. H. *corner.*) From this place we can watch them all nicely.

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ZERL. (*who has again approached* LORENZO.) Lorenzo, tell me the truth! Why is it you treat me thus? What have I done? What have you to reproach me with?

BEP. *and* GIAC. (*Striking the table and calling loudly.*) What ho! Some wine!

MATT. Why, girl! how now? Don't you hear?

ZERL. (*With impatience.*) Coming! I shall go distracted. (*The bugle begins to sound.*) Roberto!

CONCERTED FINALE.

ZERLINA *makes a sign to* ROBERTO, *who carries a flask of wine to the table where sit* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO. *She tries still to speak with* LORENZO *when at that moment, the* CARBINIERS *march in from the inn* R. H. ZERLINA *gains the corner,* R. H.

Chorus of CARBINIERS.

Come, Captain! let's no longer stay,—
The hour is come, we must be gone,
Our duty calls us hence away;
To gain fresh laurels let us on!

MATT. What! so soon to duty again?

CARB. Long the sun has lit up the sky;
Sev'n o'clock will shortly strike.

LOREN. (*Starting.*) Sev'n!—the hour so nigh?
Let's away: (*To a subaltern whom he brings forward.*)
Observe. When yonder rocks we gain,
Half an hour my coming wait;
If, to return 'tis not my fate,
In my place then command; guide the men to their prey.

MATT. Alone! among the rocks?

LOREN. Honour's call I obey.

BEP. (*Aside to* GIACOMO.) It is to death he hastens on.

GIAC. He goes at last, and goes alone.

ZERL. (*looking at* LORENZO.) Shall I then let him thus begone?
No, No.

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(*She is advancing towards* LORENZO *from the* R. H. C. *when* FRANCESCO *and the wedding train, villagers, peasants, &c. with bouquets and crowns of flowers, enter from the inn* R. H. *and intercept her.*)

Together.

CHORUS OF VILLAGERS.
'Tis Hymen calls; no longer stay;
The hour is come, we must be gone.
While pipe and tabor gaily play,
To mirth and pleasure let us on!

CHORUS OF CARBINIERS.
Come, Captain! let's no longer stay;
The hour is come; we must be gone.
Our duty calls us hence away;
To gain fresh laurels let us on!

MATT. (*Joining the hands of* FRANCESCO *and* ZERLINA.)
My children, be ye blest, thus link'd in virtuous chains!
(*To* FRANCESCO). Within this hour her vows thou wilt receive.
ZERL. (*Aside.*) All then, alas! is lost; no hope remains!

(*Seeing* LORENZO *about to depart, she flies towards him.*)
Oh, Lorenzo! My tortur'd heart relieve!
What have I done?

LOREN. (*With intense passion.*) Deceiver!
ZERL. Explain!
LOREN. False betray'r!
Remember *him* I saw conceal'd with guilty care
Last night within your room!

(*Abruptly leaving her, he goes to his soldiers whom he draws up in marching order.*)

ZERL. (*Wildly*) What words are these?
With surprise and with horror my heart seems to freeze!
BEP. (*Drinking at the table.*) Will they go?
GIAC. (*The same*) Shortly now.
ZERL. What hellish plot is this?
BEP. (*Knocking on the table, and calling*) What, ho! More wine!

(*Turning round and perceiving* ZERLINA, *who is left alone, in the centre of the stage, and whom he points out to his companion.*)
I say, see there! 'Tis that same pretty she,
Whom so long at her toilet, last night we chanced to see.

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GIAC. *(Laughing.)* And who with herself so *pleas'd* seem'd to be.
You remember yet?

BEP. *(Laughing)* Yes; and shall ne'er forget.

(*Imitating* ZERLINA'S *posture before the glass, and repeating her words.*)

"For a servant there's no denying,
"Here's a shape that's not much amiss! *(Laughing.)*

GIAC: *(Mimicking her also.)*—

"There's no cause, I fancy, for sighing,
"When one boasts such a figure as this!

Together.

"I am sure there are some more amiss!
Ha! Ha! Ha!

(They resume their seats, laughing)

ZERL. *(Struck with extreme astonishment, and seeking to recal her ideas.)* Those words! What said they? What horrible plot is this!

(*Enter* LORD *and* LADY A. *from Inn.*)

Together.

CHORUS *of* VILLAGERS.
Come, Hymen calls, no longer stay;
The hour is come, we must be gone;
While pipe and tabor gaily play,
To mirth and pleasure let us on!

CHORUS *of* CARBINIERS.
Come, Captain, let's no longer stay!
The hour is come, we must be gone!
Our duty calls us hence away;
To gain fresh laurels, let us on!

(LORENZO *makes the soldiers file off before him two by two, and they begin to ascend the centre path leading up the mountain.* MATTEO, *at the same time, comes to* ZERLINA, *and taking her hand, shews her the wedding-party, preparing to depart. At this instant,* ZERLINA *sees* LORENZO *on the point of disappearing, when, with a cry of anguish, she rushes to the top of the stage.*)

ZERL. In mercy stop!—One moment stay!
Hear me! Oh. hear!

ALL. *(Surprised at her emotion)* What would she say?

(With looks of astonishment they all gather round her; the Carbiniers return on their steps, and LORENZO *hastily descends to her side. The music ceases.*)

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ZERL. (*Seizing* LORENZO's *hand, fixing her looks on him steadfastly, and speaking with much emotion.*) I know not,—I am ignorant who has created the vile suspicions that assail me, and I seek in vain to discover the dark mystery; but this I know, that last night I was alone in my chamber,—(*with emphasis, and looking at* LORENZO.) Yes, alone! I thought of persons dear—most dear to me; and I remember well to have spoken aloud words which I deemed no human ear could have heard; yet, those words—those very words, breathed only to heaven in pure and guileless innocence, have this very instant been repeated, close to me.

LOREN. By whom?

ZERL. (*Suddenly pointing to* BEPPO *and* GIACOMO.) Those two men, whom I know nothing of; they must consequently have been near me—last night—in my chamber—without my knowledge.

LOREN. Ha! Seize them!

FINALE CONTINUED.

ALL. Surprise!

LOREN. Seize them both without more delay

CARBS. and VILLAGERS. } The Captain's orders { we / all } obey;
Yes, seize them both without delay.

(*Matteo secures Giacomo, while the soldiers seize Beppo.*)

LOREN. Should these the bandits be whose pursuit brought us here?

(*Making the guide come forward.*)

Say, you who know their chief and have sworn our guide to be—
Behold these men, and speak, devoid of fear,—
Is he one of these?

GUIDE. (*After considering them for some time.*)
No.

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BEP. }
GIAC. } (*Aside.*) Again we may breathe free!

LOREN. Their looks suspicious still appear.

MATT. (*Going to Lorenzo, with the arms and paper seized on Giacomo.*)
These weapons see!
And this paper also, of some ill plot the key.

(*Music ceases again.*)

LOREN. (*Hastily snatching the paper.*) Let 's read:—
"As soon as the carbiniers and the wedding train shall
"have departed, be sure to give me notice by ringing the
"bell of the hermitage. I will then hasten, with some of
"my brave fellows, and take the charge of my lord and my
"lady."

LORD A. (*Struck with terror.*) Eh! Shocking!

FINALE—(*Continued.*)

LORD A. Can it be!

LADY A. (*Trembling.*) It is a plot against us two!
(*To Lorenzo.*)
What 's the meaning of this?

LOREN. We shall find out. (*Calling to him two of the carbiniers.*)

LORD A. I tremble (*To Lady A.*) for *you*.

LADY A. For yourself.

LORD A. For you and me.
Let then love ——

LADY A. Or else fear, our peacemaker be.

(*They take each others hands, in full reconciliation.*)

LOREN. (*To one of the carbiniers, to whom he has been giving instructions.*)
Quick my commands obey; as I've said, place them all.
(*The carbinier returns to his comrades, to whom he imparts his captain's orders.*)
You,—(*to the other carbinier, showing him Giacomo.*)
to the hermitage ascend with *him*: if he rebel—
Beneath your sword that instant let him fall.
(*To the wedding train and villagers.*)

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For *you*, my friends, now hide ye well
Behind those trees, until our prey shall come.
(Placing BEPPO *in the centre of the stage.)*
And *you*, take your station there—there!
And if to play us false by word or sign you dare,
(Striking his carbine, and pointing to the bushes, R. H.)
Remember that I'm at hand. You conceive?

BEP. (*Trembling.*) But too well.

LOREN. Be dumb!

(*The soldier that has charge of Giacomo has conducted him to the hermitage, which is at the top of the mountain, facing the audience. The soldier keeps inside the chapel, and only Giacomo's arms are seen, as he begins slowly tolling the bell. Francesco and some of the villagers conceal themselves in the arbour* L. H. *Lord and Lady* ALLCASH, *Zerlina, and Lorenzo, take their station behind the tuft of trees, close to the door of the inn* R. H. *Beppo remains alone in the centre of the stage.*

CHORUS.

Blest Pow'rs that still the good protect,
Oh, grant us now your aid!

ZERL. Does some one come?

LOREN. No,—not as yet.

BEP. (*Aside.*) May he shun the snare for him laid!

CHORUS.

Blest Pow'rs, that still the good protect,
Oh, grant us now your aid!

MATT. (*Looking out near the centre-path of the mountain.*)
Some one's now upon the hill

LOREN. All keep back, and be still.

(*The carbiniers disappear instantly, both on the* R. H. *and* L. H. MATTEO *joins* ZERLINA; *the stage is left clear, and* FRA-DIAVOLO *appears on the summit of the mountain towards the* L. H. *He stops, looks around, and perceives no one but* GIACOMO *tolling the hermitage-bell, and* BEPPO *down in the front.*)

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FRA-D. (*Calling.*) Beppo!

LOREN. (*Behind the trees, presenting his carbine at* BEPPO.)
Dare not to stir!

FRA-D. Is there a free access?
And in safety may I advance?

LOREN. (*Still aiming his carbine at* BEPPO.) Answer, Yes.

BEP. (*Trembling violently, but without looking.*) Yes.

LOREN. Louder still.

BEP. (*Turning his head towards the mountain,* L. H.)
Yes—yes—all is right.

(FRA-DIAVOLO, *making a signal to three of his companions, begins to descend the mountain with confidence.*)

Pleasure invites to fresh delight,—
And fortune my steps will gaily speed!

BEP. (*Muttering to himself.*) Pretty fortune indeed!

GUIDE. (*By the side of* LORENZO, *suddenly.*)
'Tis Diavolo!

LOREN. Can it be!

GUIDE. My oath I'll take.

LORD A. (*Seeing* FRA-DIAVOLO *as he approaches, and with an exclamation of terror and surprise.*)
It is the Marquis!

LADY A. Oh! fatal mistake!
This great signor—

LORD A. This noble lover
Was but a robber, you now discover!

(*During the above,* FRA-DIAVOLO *has gained the level ground, and advances leisurely towards* BEPPO.)

FRA-D. (*Leaning on* BEPPO'S *shoulder.*)
Friend Beppo, see!—Fate has blest me all my life.
My lord at last,
And his gold, and his wife,
All are mine!—

LOREN. (*Appearing suddenly.*)—Not so fast!

(*Instantly the rocks, the mountain-paths, and the sides of the stage, become covered with the carbiniers, who level their guns at* FRA-DIAVOLO *and* BEPPO. BEPPO *falls on the ground;* MATTEO *at* LORENZO'S *movement has rushed*

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and snatched DIAVOLO'S *carbine from his hand, and turning round, presents it at his head. The three banditti, who have remained at the top of the stage are disarmed by the peasants.*)

CHORUS.

Victoria! Victoria! Victoria!

(LORENZO *makes a sign to remove* FRA-DIAVOLO, *who, along with* BEPPO, *is led away by a party of carbiniers.*)

QUINTETT.

ZERLINA, LORENZO, LORD A., LADY A., *and* MATTEO.

With gratitude now blended,
Let joy in ev'ry bosom reign;
Happiness and peace again,
Now may our hopes obtain!
The furious storm once ended,
The sailor's song will cheerful flow;
Thus our hearts new joy will know,
When rid of this dread foe!
And fearless, each hind in his lone retreat,
This dreadful name may now repeat—
Diavolo!—Diavolo!

(*Just then* DIAVOLO, *preceded by four carbiniers and followed by four more, appears conducted across the mountain.*)

CHORUS. (*Pointing to him, and finishing the air with a loud burst.*)—

DIAVOLO!

Victoria! Victoria! Victoria!
With heart and voice,
Loud rejoice!

(BEPPO, *who is guarded behind* DIAVOLO, *throws himself down, refusing to march on. The soldiers drag him struggling across the mountain, as the curtain falls.*)

END OF THE OPERA.

BAYLIS AND LEIGHTON,
JOHNSON'S COURT, FLEET STREET.

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Sirles-Oberlin
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